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Soviet Union

Military Affairs

The Armed Forces Disaster Relief Effort in Armenia

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FBIS Editorial Comment: Armed Forces' Disaster Relief, December 1988

[Text] Following the large earthquake in northern Armenia on 7 December 1988, the Soviet Armed Forces were called upon to play a large role in the assistance effort to the stricken area. The disaster-related military activities fall into several major categories. The armed forces provided: 1) immediate security around Leninakan and Spitak; 2) immediate medical assistance through surviving medical facilities and personnel in the Transcaucasus Military District; 3) personnel and equipment to rescue people from the rubble; 4) military air transport into Armenia; 5) local air support by helicopter; 6) a communications system in the disaster area; 7) fuels and material support facilities; 8) air traffic control; 9) a joint effort with the MVD to police surrounding areas, including Yerevan. Special military commandants were appointed for the Yerevan area and the immediate disaster area.

The Military Commitment

The military relief effort involved troops from various arms and services, including but not limited to the civil defense troops. The articles below note that the first troops to arrive were two airborne subunits, followed by engineering troops, civil defense troops, pipelaying troops, construction troops, communications troops, railroad troops, and medical service and Air Force personnel. This list is probably not exhaustive. Some 1,200 soldiers arrived at the scene between 1400 and 1500 on 7 December and began rescue work. In a televised broadcast on 13 December General of the Army Yazov stated that 18,990 servicemen were working in the area, including "10,626 men working directly in Leninakan."

Nationality Conflict

In Yerevan the military commandant, Lt General A. Makashov, became involved in a face-to-face conflict with members of the "Karabakh Committee," which was

concerned with the ongoing nationality dispute. This general problem led military personnel into performing police duties in Yerevan, including crowd control, and the detention of demonstrators. The articles are vague as to whether the troops involved were military or internal service (MVD). In any case, they were not completely able to prevent violence between the nationalities. On 13 December Ryzhkov stated in a televised news conference that: "...people were killed in Sumgait. Yes, they were a few hours late in separating the two nationalities. For that reason, to ensure no repetition on a greater scale, we introduced a curfew in those cities, and we were forced to introduce it in rural areas, as I said—16 in Armenia and 12 in Azerbaijan, and in Leninakan."

Airlift

Despite, or perhaps due to, General of the Army Yazov's appointment to the Ryzhkov Commission overseeing the relief effort, command and control of the military forces was not explicitly centralized. The CINC, Air Force, Marshal Yefimov, apparently had a hand in the allocation of military transport planes devoted to earthquake relief. Nonetheless, a massive airlift was undertaken. On 12 December 115 aircraft were involved in the airlift. Reports vary thereafter. One article reported that on 14 December 150 military air transport aircraft were in use, while another referred to 437 military aircraft and 115 helicopters from 40 airfields. By 16 December 800 military aircraft were said to be involved, according to Marshal Yefimov. The civil air traffic control system was overwhelmed early on, and air traffic control was passed to the military.

In an interesting footnote, the Antonov design bureau was asked to provide support members to reinforce the floor of at least one An-124 so that it could carry a crane weighing around 72 tons.

The articles that follow have been excerpted so as to focus on the military relief effort and do not constitute comprehensive coverage of the Armenian disaster as reflected in the Soviet press. Information published up to 17 December 1988 is included in this collection.

Ryzhkov, Yazov on Relief Commission
LD0712210988 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1840 GMT 7 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow, 7 Dec (TASS)—To coordinate work on a union-wide scale on eliminating the consequences of the earthquake in Armenia and to give help to those affected, a commission of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo has been set up, headed by Nikolay Ryzhkov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers.

The commission comprises Nikolay Slyunkov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; Dmitriy Yazov, candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, USSR minister of defense; Yuriy Batalin and Lev Voronin, deputy chairmen of the USSR Council of Ministers.

The commission has started work.

Commission Decides to Call for Additional Military Units

LD0812200988 Moscow TASS in English 1959 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Moscow December 8 TASS—A Politburo commission led by Soviet Prime Minister Nikolay Ryzhkov has arrived in Armenia. The purpose of the commission is to coordinate nationwide efforts to eliminate the effects of the strong earthquake which shook northern Armenia on December 7 and which inflicted considerable damage and loss of life.

The commission members conferred with the republic's leadership in the building of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee this morning. Leaders of some federal ministries also took part in the conference. A number of large-scale and urgent measures were decided upon at the conference to provide emergency relief, and the main directions of the commission's activities were planned.

It was decided to call in additional military units, including those specialising in engineering, and send in high-powered up-to-date machinery, truck-mounted cranes and heavy-duty helicopters, to provide homeless people with makeshift housing and give them accommodation in holiday homes and other health resorts, to provide them with warm clothes and with the assistance of army units to set up emergency feeding for quake victims.

[Passage omitted]

Taking part in conversations with local people were Politburo member and Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee Nikolay Slyunkov, Soviet defence minister, alternate member of Politburo Dmitriy Yazov, and Deputy Prime Ministers Yuriy Batalin,

Lev Voronin, and Boris Shcherbina. When touring the worst-hit areas the commission members were accompanied by Suren Arutyunyan, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party.

Taking into account what they had seen, the commission took a number of additional measures to accelerate all rescue and rehabilitation work.

ARMENPRESS Reports Quake

NC0912132088 Yerevan ARMENPRESS International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 9 Dec 88

[Text] Yerevan, 9 December, ARMENPRESS—As we have already reported, at about 1141 on 7 December a strong quake shook several cities and rayons in the republic, resulting in damage and much human loss.

The epicenter of the quake which was 10 km from Spitak city, registered 10 units [on a 12-unit scale], while the quake in Yerevan registered 6-6.5 units.

Following that, the Yerevan seismological center registered various weaker tremors with [word indistinct] tendencies.

Official Communique on Quake, Relief Efforts

PM1012175388 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 10 Dec 88 Second Edition p 1

[Official communique on the earthquake in Armenia: "From the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, and the USSR Council of Ministers: On the Earthquake in the Armenian SSR"]

[Text] As has already been reported, an earthquake with very tragic consequences occurred in a number of areas in Armenia.

According to the Yerevan seismic station, the tremors measured more than force 10 in the epicenter, which was in the area of the city of Leninakan. It was the strongest quake in Transcaucasia on record.

The natural calamity struck a territory with a population of over 700,000. Thousands were killed, tens of thousands injured, and hundreds of thousands left homeless.

The severest blow was dealt to the cities of Leninakan, Spitak, Kirovakan, and Stepanavan. In Leninakan, more than 80 percent of all apartment houses and service and production facilities were destroyed, including 120 buildings that were completely ruined. All the 11,000 privately owned houses were damaged and partially destroyed. A textile mill, a magnetic product works, a bicycle factory, and other industrial projects were put out of operation.

INTRODUCTION

The city of Spitak and most villages in Spitak District were almost completely demolished. Hundreds of high-rise apartment buildings, privately owned cottages, and supply lines and facilities were destroyed in Kirovakan, Stepanavan, Akhuryanskiy District, and other localities.

Motor roads and railways were damaged and power supply, telephone communications, and road and communal facilities put out of operation everywhere.

A Politburo commission led by Nikolay Ryzhkov, a member of the party Central Committee Politburo and head of government, is at work in the disaster area, taking the full range of urgent rescue and rehabilitation measures together with Armenia's party and soviet agencies and coordinating relief aid from all over the country.

Priority is being given to efforts to save people, give them medical assistance, and provide them with lodging, food, and warm clothing. The victims are also being given material aid. Military units from the Defense Ministry, Interior Ministry, and the civil defense service are actively involved in efforts dealing with the earthquake's effects.

The whole country at this hour of trial shares the grief that has befallen Armenia. Numerous letters and telegrams from working people and mass organizations are expressing deep condolences to the Armenian people.

In different constituent republics, krays, and oblasts, in Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities, and at many factories decisions have been made to give fraternal Armenia all-around aid.

Heavy-duty modern machines, helicopters, truck-mounted cranes, bulldozers, prefabricated homes, and tents are being sent to the disaster area.

Hundreds of physicians and other medical personnel as well as large consignments of medicines and donor blood have arrived there from different cities.

Working people in Azerbaijan and Georgia were among the first to respond to the neighbors' tragedy. They dispatched building, installation, and medical workers, foodstuffs, large amounts of oil products, and mobile gas-filling stations to Armenia and made offers of sanatoriums and rest homes for victims of the quake.

All this strikingly reflects the great friendship of the peoples of this multinational country and their readiness to give a brother's helping hand to one another at any minute.

The grief of this country is shared by people in many other countries. The governments of a number of states and international organizations have expressed condolences and offered help.

In view of the tragic effects of the earthquake in Armenia, the death of many people, it has been decided to proclaim 10 December 1988 a day of national mourning in the Soviet Union.

Ryzhkov: Military Working on Rubble Clearance
*LD1012011488 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
2330 GMT 9 Dec 88*

[Interview with Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, by unidentified correspondent on 9 December; place not given; first paragraph is introduction—recorded]

[Excerpts] As we have reported, a CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission headed by Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, is working in the Armenian regions hit by an earthquake. Listen to an interview given by Comrade Ryzhkov on the evening of 9 December to our special correspondent.

[Correspondent] Nikolay Ivanovich, on the basis of your assessment, what is the degree of destruction in the disaster regions?

[Ryzhkov] The degree of destruction in these regions is very great. Leninakan was hardest hit. In the city, 120 nine-story apartment buildings were destroyed, completely destroyed. Industrial buildings were destroyed as well as social installations, shops, hospitals, and nurseries. The small town of Spitak was virtually completely destroyed. Evidently there is nothing left for us to restore there, and the Politburo commission is examining this matter and will adopt a decision to erect completely new buildings on the site. Three days have passed since the earthquake began. It is now the 4th day. The Politburo commission has been working for 2 days directly in the earthquake zone, the disaster zone, and at the headquarters in Yerevan.

Consequently, all possible measures are being taken to first conduct the necessary rescue work and then to determine priorities for building new housing, restoring industrial buildings, and other works. So now all the activity of all the bodies located here is concentrated specifically on rescuing people. Work is under way; major work and very many people are involved—several thousand people from Yerevan are working. Now detachments from other republics are arriving. They have come from Georgia, and teams from other regions are arriving. Much is being done by the Soviet Army, which is transferring units here. Early today two engineering regiments will begin to clear the rubble.

[Passage omitted]

All the equipment available for this kind of work in the USSR is being mobilized. We are moving part of it tonight by military transport aircraft and loading the rest onto trains in other towns, so it will be on its way tomorrow morning. In a day or two we can send more of the necessary equipment, which will enable us to carry out this most complicated and essential (?task).

People are working very well, and they are giving the necessary help. The injured are being sent to hospitals. Many doctors have arrived from Moscow. A great amount of work is being done by the medical people of Armenia. Military doctors have arrived from Georgia and have done themselves proud. We consider that they are completely fulfilling their tasks.

[Passage omitted]

Akhromeyev, Others on Relief Work
PM0812195188 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Dec 88 Morning Edition pp 1, 6

[Unattributed feature: "Time of Trial. Entire Country Goes to Armenia's Assistance"]

[Excerpts] The unprecedentedly severe natural disaster that has befallen Armenia saddens the entire country, and assistance to the victims is a most important matter for the Soviet people. Emergency commissions are operating. Union and republican ministries and departments are providing immediate assistance to Armenia. On the afternoon of 8 December IZVESTIYA correspondents sought information from their leaders. Here is what they said:

Marshal of the Soviet Union S. Akhromeyev, chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff:

"As of 8 December 6,500 servicemen, 25 teams of military medics, and 400 pieces of equipment are taking part in rescue work in the disaster regions. Armed forces aircraft and helicopters are evacuating the injured and homeless to rayons of Armenia which did not suffer. People needing medical assistance are also being admitted to Defense Ministry medical establishments. Army field kitchens have been deployed where the earthquake struck and food is being organized for the population and participants in the rescue operation. Tents and blankets are being issued from military stocks."

"Civil defense subunits will be deployed and sent to the disaster regions from 9 through 11 December. The Army will do everything to provide real assistance to alleviate the consequences of the terrible calamity for Armenia's people."

[Passage omitted]

V. Yudashkin deputy chief of the Ministry of Civil Aviation Central Operations Control Administration:

"All the ministry's administrations are working round the clock. During the night the duty team is headed by a deputy minister. Practically all the country's civil aviation administrations are helping to deal with the consequences of the earthquake. Deputy Minister O. Smirnov has flown out to Armenia with a large group of aides to coordinate work on the spot."

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"Extra aircraft and helicopters have been made available. Mi-10K helicopters are being sent to Yerevan from Tyumen and Syktyvkar and Mi-8 helicopters from the North Caucasus and Tu-154 aircraft are flying in from Riga and Leningrad... Unfortunately, the weather in Yerevan is not good. It is foggy. But some aircraft managed to slip through during the night and in the morning. Problems arise at every step, every minute. Everything has to be tackled promptly. There are no problems with fuel. A Tu-134 flew to Yerevan on 8 December carrying working groups from various ministries and departments. They are hastening to the rescue."

V. Bakatin, USSR Minister of Internal Affairs:

"Yesterday, immediately after it happened, instructions went out to the command of the internal security forces and also to the contingent which is already in Armenia in connection with the well-known events. Personnel have been released from their posts and dispatched to the disaster area. Some 6,000 people were involved in the rescue operation, pulling people out of the ruins all night without a respite.

"Today a special medical team of our ministry flew out to Yerevan. We have issued essential drugs and medicines, tents and blankets, and tens of portacabins from our stocks. V. Trushin, first deputy minister of internal affairs, has spent the past few days in Baku in order to coordinate operations to ensure the maintenance of public order. He has been instructed to go to Yerevan and to also send part of the personnel there. At the moment we are putting together two regiments of reservists. They will be sent to Armenia to provide necessary engineering and technical assistance. A team of fire fighters headed by the chief of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs Fire Service Main Administration is also in the disaster area. All our staffers have been set three specific tasks. The first and most important is to rescue people of whom many are still buried in the debris; the second is to give assistance to the victims; and the third, to oversee the observance of public order and check any instances of looting or theft.

"The headquarters set up in our ministry will coordinate its work around the clock with the state commission and other ministries and departments."

[Passage omitted]

Lieutenant General A. Kapochkin, first deputy chief of staff of USSR Civil Defense:

"All Armenian civil defense detachments have been mobilized. We have sent a civil defense military unit to Leninakan, for instance, where the damage is particularly severe.

"On 7 December I spoke to L. Melkonov, the republic civil defense chief of staff. He was in a hurry to get to Leninakan. Communications there had been disrupted. It was necessary to set up a communications center.

"Our detachments are taking part in the rescue and restoration operations alongside military subunits and volunteers also in Kirovakan, Spitak, and Stepanavan—in short, everywhere. Combined civil defense mechanized detachments are in action, and that means dozens, hundreds of trucks, bulldozers, and excavators. The situation is complex. But work does not stop for a minute..."

[Passage omitted]

Two Engineering Regiments Arrive, Five More Due

LD0912201288 Moscow TASS in English 2000 GMT 9 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Moscow December 9 TASS—The special commission of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee's Politburo, which is led by head of Government Nikolay Ryzhkov, held an exacting review this morning of the fulfilment of tasks set to rescue workers for the past night, summing up the results of the work done during that time and defining further priorities.

All this was done with the participation of the heads of central ministries and agencies, the National Council of Trade Unions and the leadership of Armenia.

It was stressed once again that the main task remains to clear debris as soon as possible. There still may be survivors trapped underneath.

Soviet Army troops, for example, rescued 200 people from under the rubble of an industrial facility last night.

Every minute counts when it comes to saving the living and completely retrieving the bodies of the dead.

Soviet Army troops and volunteers from among local residents and young people arriving from Yerevan and other cities and constituent republics work on this overriding task with utter dedication, pausing neither for sleep nor rest and demonstrating real examples of humane heroism.

[Passage omitted]

Headquarters are to be set up in Spitak, Leninakan and Kirovakan to coordinate the rescue effort. The headquarters will include commanders of Army units stationed in these cities, officials supervising the work of transport, trade, the communal economy. Secretaries of the Central Committee of Armenia's Communist Party have been instructed to head these headquarters.

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Late in the evening the Politburo commission summed up the results of the rescue and rehabilitation effort for December 9. It was noted that the pace and scope of the work increases. Railway traffic toward the cities of Leninakan and Spitak was, specifically, resumed. The Leninakan station received the first trainloads of cargoes. Highway bridges, tunnels are being rebuilt. The railway bed is cleared of boulders, landslides are checked. Traffic on roads leading to Spitak, Leninakan is put to order to give a green light to automobile columns with equipment, food and other priority cargoes.

Two more regiments of engineering troops and a team of railway workers arrived in the disaster area. Their personnel joined immediately in the rehabilitation effort. Five regiments are to arrive in the days ahead. Army units set up stations to provide hot meals for the population. The water mains, power and telephone services are being restored.

[Passage omitted]

Arrival of First Military in Leninakan, Spitak
*PM0912101588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 9 Dec 88
Second Edition pp 1, 6*

[Special correspondents A. Sarkisyan and V. Khatuntsev dispatch: "Our Pain and Tragedy. Devastating Earthquake"]

[Excerpts] Yerevan—The earthquake's epicenter was 50 km from Leninakan. The loss of human life runs into thousands, and many buildings have been totally destroyed.

[Passage omitted].

Calamity does not choose a convenient time. When it happened one of us was transmitting the latest dispatch on events in the republic, the other was attending a session of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau. All we felt during the first few seconds was the floor shaking. The building started swaying like a ship at sea. The bureau session was interrupted. The first reaction was to telephone the Armenian AES. A calamity might have occurred there. The report came after a couple of minutes: All was in order at the power station. The tremor had registered force 5 near the AES. The power station stood up to it, there were not even any cracks. The power industry workers' settlement was not damaged either. A Central Committee secretary called chemical industry enterprises and the Physics Institute, where an accelerator was in operation.... No emergencies there, either. The Yerevan Gorispolkom chairman contacted the city rayons: No serious damage was reported.

It looked as if a sigh of relief could be heaved. Suddenly someone asked: Where was the earthquake epicenter?

"Probably in Leninakan," someone else hazarded a guess.

M. Mkrtchyan, first secretary of the Leninakan Party Gorkom, was nervously dialing a number. No answer.

"This cannot be," Misak Levonovich said, "someone must answer."

Army representative Yu. Kuznetsov, member of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau, tried to help. No, no contact with Leninakan.

"Go to the airport," he told M. Mkrtchyan. "Fly there by helicopter."

Yu. Kuznetsov issued an order over the telephone: Send helicopters off to four destinations in the north. As yet the only alarming news was the broken communications with the republic's second largest city. The Bureau session resumed. Nobody knew yet about the horrific misfortune that had befallen the land of Armenia....

Clocks in Leninakan had stopped at 1141 hours. They had stopped as a sign of major disaster.

[Passage omitted].

Dusk fell quickly and the night, so unwelcome to Leninakan's residents, suddenly enveloped the city in darkness. The city—without power, without water, without gas—appeared altogether defenseless. But there was no panic. Leninakan's residents, together with the soldiers and volunteers from other cities in the republic who had come to help, did not for a minute stop the rescue work and brought out the injured, women, and children. Fires were burning in the squares and near the single-story older homes, and the town's residents, huddled in the warmth, were getting ready to spend the night in the street.

[Passage omitted].

As is always the case when disaster strikes, the first people to begin rescue work were servicemen from the USSR MVD internal forces and the Soviet Army.

"We arrived in Spitak between 2 and 3 in the afternoon, and we saw for ourselves that the city was in ruins," Lieutenant General N. Demidov, USSR deputy minister of internal affairs, recounted. "The first thing we did was save people. An hour later 1,200 soldiers had arrived and immediately started manhandling the rubble away. Later another 5,000 servicemen were sent to Leninakan and Spitak. We managed to save hundreds of lives. The servicemen, who are of many nationalities—Uzbeks, Russians, Kirghiz, Belorussians, Ukrainians, and Balts—have been working with utter selflessness. It should also be noted that there has not been a single recorded case of looting or mercenary-minded crime in the disaster areas in the past 24 hours. By nightfall excavators, cranes, transportation, food, and warm clothing had been dispatched to Leninakan, Kirovakan, and the other stricken

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areas. Blood-donor centers have been organized at several Yerevan clinics and hundreds of people have already given blood. The tragedy has shaken the people and appealed to the brightest feelings of international unity."

...It was hard to look at the ruins of Leninakan late at night. In the squares flickered camp fires around which women and children were huddling. Floodlights glared over the ruined buildings and soldiers were removing slabs with cranes in order to get through to people who had been buried alive. Grief-stricken people who have lost children and parents wandered the streets of the city. And there was no light in any window—not even a candle or a gas lamp.

The road from Yerevan to Leninakan, of course, was probably even visible from space because of its kilometers-long chain of fires. People rushed to their relatives for help. "First-aid" vans were rushing around. Heavy equipment was arriving. Additional military units were being brought in...

[Passage omitted].

Poor Highways, Civil Defense 'Sluggishness' Cited

PM0912130088 KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 9 Dec 88 pp 1, 4

[“Latest Reportage” by special correspondents N. Var-segov, G. Ivanov-Smolenskiy, and V. Umnov under the general heading “We Are Together”]

[Excerpts] Armenian SSR, 8 Dec—Until you have been touched by tragedy, you cannot understand it.

[Passage omitted].

On the road to Leninakan and Kirovakan the traffic is jammed solid, there seem to be vehicles here from all over the republic. Many of them have large loaves of bread on the back seat. To feed those who are still alive.

Yes, the whole republic, the whole country has now responded with a single sigh, a single impulse to the grief of the devastated cities. Yes, even today, on only the second day of the tragedy, a mass of equipment has accumulated in Spitak, Leninakan, and Kirovakan, and hundreds of doctors have flown or driven in. Yes, all this is true.

But yesterday, but at first, in the first hours... In the endless, unending traffic jams, in the semiparalysis of Leninakan by night, whenever the pain of what we had seen receded for a moment, we caught ourselves thinking bitter thoughts. How in many countries they do not simply love rapid, convenient driving—they “also” understand the strategic significance of their expressways and highways. We thought how much we could write about the impotence, the sluggishness of our civil defense system. How we all cut our teeth on criticizing

the quality of our construction and installation work. (The Armenians’ sincerity and the way they pull together during these hours can cause nothing but admiration.) But where were the seismologists, architects, and clerks of the works who designed and built apartment blocks that collapsed like matchboxes. We wondered, finally, why it was that 6 hours—6 whole hours!—after the underground shocks in Leninakan, outside each former apartment block there was at best a single crane tinkering helplessly.

These thoughts were, alas, our constant companions over the last 24 hours. They were still with us yesterday when we entered the city of Spitak.

By a cruel irony of the elements, the first few buildings as we entered this city of 20,000 were intact, and camouflaged the traces of the earthquake’s blows. The irony was indeed cruel. Leaving the car, we walked along the central street. After walking about a kilometer, we still had not found out what the street used to be called. Virtually all the buildings have turned into heaps of ruins. [Passage omitted].

“We have now basically started up rescue operations,” Lieutenant Colonel P.B. Novakovkiy, military commandant of Spitakskiy Rayon, tell us. “At first the main burden fell on the soldiers and MVD subunits who arrived. We must make more effort efficiently to organize the work of the people who have come in from other regions, sometimes poorly equipped and helpless. Party raykom First Secretary Norik Grigoryevich Muradyan, who has himself lost three sisters, is still literally in the front line. I wish to mention the teams from Razdan and Aparanskiy and Aragatsskiy Rayons. They have brought their own picks and spades. On the first night alone, 700 people were taken to the nearby Ashtarak hospital. Help has come from neighboring Georgia too. The first column arrived from there at 0300 hours. More and more equipment is pouring in from all the areas that were not affected by the earthquake. But the shocks were too severe, virtually all the city’s residential and administrative buildings were destroyed or damaged, and unfortunately there is very little hope of rescuing those who remain under the ruins. But we are continuing to work.”

[Passage omitted].

“We are taking the dead and injured to the stadium,” Lieutenant Colonel V.A. Kozlov, chief of department at the republic civil defense staff. “We have now set up two teams—immediate and specialized aid. Students from Yerevan Medical Institute are helping us too. We are trying to ship those who can be moved to Yerevan by helicopter as quickly as possible. But there are many people who are seriously injured, and some die even after they have been freed from the ruins...”

Helicopters take off from beside the stadium every 10-15 minutes. They give some people hope, rob others of hope. We watched the helicopters from a steep slope and,

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like Jack London's heroes who supported with their gaze the man jumping over the abyss, we silently willed the helicopters: "Get them there... Get them there..." From the slope a panorama opens up—as if the city had undergone a severe bombing.

[Passage omitted].

Yes, at first, basically in the first few hours of the tragedy, not everything is properly coordinated, the right hand does not always know what the left hand is doing. But we can and must understand this. Today, on all the jammed roads of Armenia, there are grief and compassion, human tears, and thousands, hundreds of thousands of people who instantly became "people with the same blood group." Today, during these hours, the whole of Armenia is a one-way street.

And that street leads to people.

Five Civil Defense Units to Kirovakan, Leninakan
LD1212155688 Moscow TASS in English 1530 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—More than 12,000 officers and men and some 18 thousand men in units of civil defence participate in the rescue effort to eliminate the aftermath of the quake in Armenia, a TASS correspondent was told at the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces today.

Alongside the personnel of the Transcaucasian Military District, soldiers of a number of other military districts participate in rescue and rehabilitation operations. Over 2,000 units of various roadbuilding and other equipment are used.

Work to clear debris, rebuild roads, evacuate the population and give it all-round assistance continued in the disaster area in the past day. 102 people trapped by debris were rescued by soldiers on December 11, and 214 bodies were pulled out from under rubble. Altogether 18.5 thousand people were pulled out from debris in the past four days.

Units of civil defences rescued 40 people and pooled out 70 bodies from ruins on December 11. Altogether, during the rescue effort units of civil defence rescued 13.5 thousand people and pulled 8,100 bodies trapped by debris.

From December 7 medical personnel of the Transcaucasian Military District gave medical aid to 5,700 victims of the quake. The biggest part of them were evacuated to medical institutions of the USSR Health Ministry and to hospitals of the Transcaucasian Military district.

More than 700 field kitchens were set up and are functioning in the disaster area. Eight bakeries provide bread for servicemen and local population (over 40 tons of bread is baked daily).

Up to 15 km of roads was cleared on December 11. As many as 12 passages were dug out the rubble. Units of railwaymen cleared 1.5 km of road at Nabaldyan Station. Nine roadblocks out of 19 were removed on Nabaldyan-Spitak stretch. As many as 38 trainloads of cargoes were discharged.

Five mechanised regiments of civil defence arrive in Kirovakan and Leninakan today and tomorrow. Three bath and laundry trains will later arrive in Kirovakan, Leninakan and Baladzhary.

On December 11 aircraft of the military transport aviation delivered to Armenia 34 cranes, nine excavators, eight tractors, 906 tents, eight tons of medicines, 24 tons of food. As many as 71 truck-mounted cranes have not been delivered to the point of destination as the airports of Yerevan and Leninakan are extremely busy, and also because of unfavourable metrological conditions.

Soldiers spare no efforts to rescue those who are still alive and to bring life back to normal in the disaster area.

Ryzhkov, Yazov in 13 Dec News Conference
LD1312184088 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1600 GMT 13 Dec 88

[From the "Vremya" newscast; news conference given in Yerevan on 12 December by Nikolay Ryzhkov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, with Nikolay Slyunkov and General Dmitriy Yazov, members of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo Commission, and Suren Arutyunyan, first secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee—recorded]

[Editor's note: this item and the following one represent coverage of the same news conference. Both are included here, because of the differences between the Moscow Television Service version and the PRAVDA version.]

[Excerpts] [Ryzhkov] On behalf of the Soviet Government, I would like to take advantage of the fact that a number of foreign correspondents and representatives of mass information organs are present at this meeting, to express heartfelt gratitude to all the governments for the kind words addressed to Armenia and to the Soviet Union during these grave moments for us. We have received very many sincere condolences from virtually all countries of the world. We also thank the governments, state leaders, government leaders, public organizations, and business people of these countries who have expressed the wish to help our country both on the moral and material level.

[Passage omitted]

In our time we have had to live through Chernobyl, including myself personally and my deputies who are here now, and I would say that the atmosphere was totally different, totally different, at that time. There was a kind of a feeling of suspicion around, a kind of

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criticism; and today this is quite unlike what there was 2 years ago. I believe that this is the result of the great changes now taking place in the world. It is the result, as Mikhail Sergeyevich says, of the new political thinking—that is when we really begin to understand that the main thing in the world is common human values, human life and existence. And we have become convinced of this precisely now that this disaster has happened in our land. Therefore, I would like once again to express through you our sincere gratitude to all countries for their moral and material support.

What is the scale? I would like just to warn you at once that there is no great precision here, because everything is so complicated and so serious that it is very difficult today to evaluate anything with great precision—even what we have done.

The zone has a diameter of 80 km, 80 km. According to scientific estimates, in the epicenter—and this was not far from the town of Spitak, a distance of approximately 20 km, between Spitak and Leninakan—the intensity was 10-10.5 in the Richter scale. Yes. Approximately 500,000 people have been made homeless. There also is an estimate of 450,000 but we are rounding it off in this way and believe that 500,000 people have been made homeless; 12,000 people—well, so far—received injuries; 6,000 of them have been hospitalized.

How many have died? We can more or less confidently say that approximately 15,000 people have been pulled out dead, so far. How many have died in fact? This can only be shown by calculations. ...

[Passage omitted]

Of course, the republic did not have sufficient lifting equipment, primarily, of course, truck-mounted cranes and excavators. Therefore, the first thing we started when we had made sure of the true scale of the destruction and, indeed, the form of this destruction, was that we became convinced that a very great deal of heavy equipment was required. After that, we started the airlift. Of course, there are very many difficulties. Much of the equipment does not fit into heavy aircraft—the equipment has to be dismantled, and some of it just will not fit. Nevertheless, we were ferrying equipment in by air for 3 days in succession. We simply had no other route.

Simultaneously, convoys were being loaded in those towns which had been issued with instructions. The first convoy is starting to come in today. Today we have consignments of freight in the air, on the runway. [video shows Ryzhkov opening notebook, flips through pages to find data] Today we have in the loading ports, in the air, and coming in—although these are the morning figures I have—90 units, 50 still being loaded, so that is 140 units which still have to be ferried in by air and there are 160 units on their way by rail.

[Passage omitted]

I want you to understand us correctly here: In the first 3 days nobody listened to us, nobody. There was a state of shock. Every family had lost somebody, and they said, until we dig down to these people, we will not go anywhere.

[Passage omitted]

Food has been organized. There are no great problems with food today. Of course, today the question in general is that of the organization of work, because sometimes the roads are very jammed and air transport is not coping, because we have to bring in equipment, materials, tents, and blankets and also take the injured people away. So, the roads are very jammed, although we are taking very serious measures.

[Passage omitted]

[Announcer] Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov then answered correspondents' questions.

[Unidentified man] How do you assess the organization of the rescue work and the measures taken to eliminate the aftermath of the natural disaster which has hit Armenia?

[Ryzhkov] I assess it in this way: Some of our services functioned very precisely. I did not mention the medical services in my opening address. The medical services functioned—and are functioning—very well, very well. Suffice it say that on the first day, when it happened, when there was no power, no water or anything there, they were in field conditions—tents and hospitals were set up—2,500 of the most complicated operations were performed. In 24 hours! So, medical services functioned very well, and still are, although things are now proceeding more calmly.

[Passage omitted]

[Unidentified man] Together with other colleagues, I was in the town of Leninakan. And my impression was the following: I saw many soldiers at the airport, but, speaking honestly, I did not see any soldiers rescuing people precisely where the residents were rescuing those who were trapped in the ruins. How many soldiers are now engaged in precisely such work and how many soldiers are now (?digging out people) in this zone?

[Ryzhkov] We brought the Army in a major way. And I am saying once again that the Soviet Army is doing a very great deal in this region.

You have formed a certain impression. Well, obviously you have your point of view. I will say this: yes, we did indeed introduce two military subunits into two towns, and I have already said, into Leninakan and Spitak; we brought in an assault landing regiment and an assault brigade. We brought them in in order to create a normal

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situation. If you had been there on the first day—or as I was in the early hours of the second day—you would have been convinced that it was impossible to work there.

[Yazov interrupts] You would not have gotten there, it's as simple as that.

[Ryzhkov] You would never have gotten there. You would not even be asking me a question today because you simply would not have gotten there. Therefore, we did indeed bring in those troops. We surrounded the town, and if you have not noticed it we are not letting through a single passenger car. If you please, people travel up to this zone, leave their cars—and you have probably seen that there are parking lots there, where hundreds and thousands of vehicles are standing—and then go on foot into the town to find their relatives, and so on. It is therefore necessary for us to create public order. we do not conceal the fact that we have done this, and we think that we have been right to do it.

From the viewpoint of the military subunits, their participation, they are taking the most active part. First, we mobilized them; we deployed seven engineering regiments, two of which are already working—in Leninakan itself, incidentally. You have noticed the military machines which are clearing the obstructions, and so on. These are the two regiments which have arrived and they are now at work. Five regiments are in motion. They are busy with the water and with communications which they are restoring, and so on. Dmitriy Timofeyevich, what have you to add?

[Yazov] There is no secret about this: 18,990 servicemen are working in the disaster zone; 10,626 men are working directly in Leninakan. You said that you had seen many people at the airport. Soldiers are indeed working at the airport to unload as quickly as possible the planes which arrive.

In Leninakan there is a small area for unloading. It takes just five aircraft, and the turn-round of the aircraft depends upon how fast they are unloaded. So there are soldiers to do the unloading both there and in Yerevan. Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, the chairman of the commission, has given the most difficult work to us. This most difficult work consists of delivering the equipment; military transport aircraft are operating—they have made 205 flights. I was in Leninakan today when the 205th flight came in.

[Slyunkov] How many aircraft do we have in operation?

[Yazov] In all, 150 aircraft. But although we have a lot of aircraft, there are few airports: There is one airport in Leninakan and one in Yerevan. Then there is the bad weather, the crashes, and other things...and we are taking no more than 40-47 flights a day. We have built a water pipeline and brought water into Spitak. Not just anyone can do this work—specialists have to do it. Yes, the

railway is also being restored. The railway went out of action on the Leninakan-Kirovakan section. The unblocking of sidings and tracks has also now been entrusted to us. So if you do not see a lot of servicemen in buildings where dismantling is taking place, this is evidently only because the majority of them are in coveralls, and are therefore not distinguishable from the civilian population. In Leninakan alone there are 10,626 servicemen working, as I told you. This is in addition to those who are maintaining law and order. That is all I have to say.

[Ryzhkov] So we are putting the airlift on to the broad shoulders of the military transport aircraft—and it is proceeding. We are, indeed, entrusting very complicated and difficult work to them, but when the airports are opened and we are not transporting the injured, then 10 minutes are allotted to unload an aircraft carrying equipment—reckon it up yourself. Of course, when an aircraft arrives, these servicemen, the soldiers instantaneously pounce on it and start to get the excavators or cranes and so on out right away. The aircraft has to leave its stand immediately. Because otherwise we would not transport anything. A mass of freight is moving. We are sending by rail what can be sent by rail, but we need the equipment today, we need tents, we need clothing. So the Army is doing a great deal.

[Arutyunyan] Nikolay Ivanovich, we have also seen how the military subunits are actively involved in the rescue work, too.

[Ryzhkov] Yes.

[Passage omitted]

[Slyunkov] Since 7 December 367 tremors have taken place; 94 of them exceeded 5.5 points over the first 24 hours.

[Ryzhkov] They are gradually dying down, but the tremors are continuing.

[Passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] Would you be so kind as to tell us in what rayons, and if possible also in Azerbaijan, there is a curfew in force?

[Ryzhkov] In Armenia we have a curfew operating in Yerevan, and a curfew has been introduced in some rayons where there is a mixture of people of Armenian nationality living with Azerbaijanis. How many rayons do you have, 16?

[Arutyunyan] A special situation has been introduced in about 16 rayons.

[Ryzhkov] So, 16 rayons, 16 rural rayons where there is a mixture of people living, and in the city of Yerevan. In Azerbaijan a curfew has been imposed in the city of Baku

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and 12 rayons where there is also a mixture of people living. That is a special situation. It has no connection with earlier events. It is not the interethnic feuds which have been going on recently, where we were forced to introduce a curfew. [sentence as heard]

[Slyunkov interjects] To unblock the roads.

[Ryzhkov] We were forced to introduce the curfew in order to prevent unpredictable events between two peoples who were inflamed to the limit. We were forced to introduce it, because many are blaming Sumgait, and so on—people were killed in Sumgait. Yes, they were a few hours late in separating the two nationalities. For that reason, to ensure no repetition on a greater scale, we introduced a curfew in those cities, and we were forced to introduce it in rural areas, as I said—16 in Armenia and 12 in Azerbaijan, and in Leninakan. But this one in Leninakan and Spitak is not at all connected with this business. It is in order to ensure normal functioning of the rescue work.

[Unidentified correspondent] (?It is something quite separate?)

[Ryzhkov] Yes, yes. It is in no way connected with the first part.

[Passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] Do you not think that the load on Yerevan airport is too great at the moment for the number of people who are working there?

[Ryzhkov] Yes, the airport is very greatly overstretched. In Leninakan we asked the military to help. They sent servicemen to help with unloading. Unloading is under way and the soldiers are helping. Here, too, of course, there are bottlenecks. So, you see, we are in a ticklish position here. Of course, one could say: Comrades, do not send anything. But when some republic or some foreign country send things, from the goodness of their hearts, can one say: Don't send them? It would be an insult to those great humane feelings. So, we are to some extent trying to regulate these processes.

Nevertheless, we are still largely overstretched. But I think that gradually we shall get into a definite rhythm and everything will fall into place.

Yazov: 2 Subunits Initially Sealed Off Cities
*PM1412125788 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 14 Dec
88 Second Edition pp 1, 2*

[TASS report: "In the Struggle With the Consequences of the Catastrophe. News Conference for Soviet and Foreign Journalists"]

[Excerpts] The attention of the entire country and the entire world has been focused on the tragic events in

Armenia. The consequences of the destructive earthquake that cost thousands of lives are grave and painful. A CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission which is coordinating work to eliminate the consequences of the natural disaster and help the victims is operating in the republic under conditions of broad glasnost.

At the request of Soviet journalists and also of a large group of accredited foreign journalists at the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Administration, N.I. Ryzhkov, the commission's chairman; N.N. Slyunkov and D.T. Yazov, members of the Central Committee Politburo commission; and also S.G. Arutyunyan, first secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee, met on 12 December with press representatives and answered their questions.

N.I. Ryzhkov delivered an introductory address to open the news conference.

[Passage omitted] What is the scale of the calamity? I want to say right away that we still do not have precise data. The affected zone is 80 km in diameter. According to scientists' estimates, the earthquake registered more than 8 points on a 12 point scale at the epicenter—between the cities of Spitak and Leninakan. Approximately 500,000 people were made homeless and 12,000 people, according to current data, were injured. Of them, 6,000 have been hospitalized.

How many have perished? Approximately 15,000 people have been pulled out dead hitherto. You can only judge how many in total have died from calculations based on the experience of world practice. These calculations made by scientists put the possible figure at 40-45,000 people.

[Passage omitted]

At the same time we are doing a great deal of work to evacuate the population. I want you to understand me correctly. During the first 3 days it proved difficult to send people away. We did everything possible to convince the population to take children, women, and old people away from the disaster zone and just leave the men here. But no one listened to us; people were in a state of shock. Every family has lost someone and no one wanted to leave until they had been found dead. Now the situation is changing and an active evacuation has begun. Some 50,000 places have been made ready for the victims in sanatoriums, clinics, vacation homes, and tourist bases—in Armenia, Georgia, and Stavropol and Krasnodar Krays in the RSFSR. Some 50,000 places have also been made ready in the Ukraine—in the Crimea, in Odessa Oblast.

In the last 24 hours 2,000 women and children have been shipped out. According to our data, 50-70,000 people will have to be evacuated. We intend to carry out this work in 10 days.

[Passage omitted]

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Then N.I. Ryzhkov and other members of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission answered correspondents' questions.

Question from Armenian Television: What is your opinion of the organization of the rescue work?

N.I. Ryzhkov: The medical services have worked and are working very well. Suffice it to say that the first day after the calamity, when there was no electricity or water in the disaster zone for 24 hours, tents and hospitals were set up in field conditions and 2,500 most complex operations were performed.

The Army is working well. By and large from the viewpoint of enthusiasm, selflessness, and dedication we cannot make any complaints about anyone. I would, of course, like it to be better from the viewpoint of the organization of the work.

In general our opinion is this: Material and technical supplies are not in doubt today. We have gathered pace and created reserves. By and large we believe that this work is going well.

[Passage omitted].

Question from a Yugoslav journalist: Do you have any new information regarding the crash of our aircraft?

N.I. Ryzhkov: I have just made inquiries. At present we do not have any additional information. The tragedy is being analyzed. We express sincere condolences to the Yugoslav people in connection with this great misfortune. It happened to people who were flying to help us. I am sure that the reason for what happened will be discovered and the true cause established. I would not like to just engage in guesswork now, it is too serious a matter. We will inform you without fail as soon as it is totally clear what happened to the aircraft. It crashed 12 km from Yerevan straight onto the highway.

Question from representative of Japan's KYODO NEWS AGENCY: I and other colleagues were in Leninakan and I got the impression that there were many soldiers at the airport; but, quite honestly, I did not see any soldiers rescuing people from the ruins. I would like to ask: How many soldiers are currently engaged in rescue work and how many are now in this zone?

N.I. Ryzhkov: Clearly, I don't know all the details. I hope that Comrade Yazov will help me. However, I will say again that the Soviet Army is doing a great deal as regards rescue work.

Indeed, in two cities—Leninakan and Spitak—we brought in two military subunits to create a normal situation in the natural disaster zone. If you had been there the day after the earthquake you would have seen for yourself that it was impossible to do any work. You wouldn't even have gotten there. And you wouldn't be

asking such a question. So, we brought troops in, sealed off the city, and—you may have noticed—we are not letting a single vehicle in. When people arrive at the zone they are asked to leave their vehicles behind. There are hundreds and thousands of vehicles waiting there while people go into town on foot to search for their relatives. We must restore social order—that is why we have done it. We think we've done the right thing.

Now to turn to the Army's participation in the rescue work. First, seven engineering regiments have been mobilized and deployed.

The military are clearing the rubble. Two regiments have arrived and are already at work. The rest are en route. The Il-76 which crashed recently was carrying two units of equipment and 70 men. I'm talking about regiments deployed by the civil defense organizations. Their aim is precisely to save people. Moreover, they are tackling the problem of water supply, communications, and restoration work.

Would you like to add anything, Dmitriy Timofeyevich?

D.T. Yazov: It is no secret that 18,990 servicemen are working in the disaster zone. There are 10,626 men working in Leninakan. You said you saw many people in uniform at the airport. Indeed, soldiers are working at the airport to ensure that planes are unloaded as quickly as possible. There's only a small unloading bay in Leninakan—it takes just five planes—and turnaround time depends on how fast we unload the aircraft. That is why soldiers are taking part in this work in Leninakan and Yerevan. Commission Chairman N.I. Ryzhkov has tasked the Army with the most difficult work, including the delivery of equipment. Military transport aircraft are very busy. They have made 205 trips.

We have many planes but there are few airfields in the zone—just Leninakan and Yerevan. The poor winter weather is not helping either. Consequently, it's not possible to have more than 40-47 flights a day.

A word about other areas: A water line has been set up and water supplied to Spitak. Nobody will do this work except us. It takes specialists. It is necessary to reopen the railroad, which is out of action on the Leninakan-Kirovakan stretch. We are reopening it. That is why you saw few military men clearing the rubble. Incidentally, soldiers doing rescue work operate in overalls and are outwardly indistinguishable from the civilian population.

N.I. Ryzhkov: Yes, we are indeed charging military transport aircraft with very complex and difficult work. When the airports open and when no injured are being carried, just 10 minutes are set aside for unloading equipment from the aircraft. When a plane arrives the soldiers immediately move the excavators and cranes away—after all, an area must be cleared otherwise there'll be no room to unload anything. We're sending by

rail anything that can be sent by rail, but people here desperately need equipment, tents, and clothes. The Army is doing a great deal in this respect as well.

N.N. Slyunkov: You and I, Nikolay Ivanovich, have repeatedly seen how busily engaged with rescue work the military subunits are. There are many examples of that.

[Passage omitted].

Portable Radio Transmitters Set Up
*LD1312201588 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
1830 GMT 13 Dec 88*

[Excerpts] The CPSU Central Committee Politburo Commission is continuing its work in Armenia. Here is a TASS report:

[Passage omitted]

This morning, as usual, an operational working planning meeting took place, chaired by Comrade Ryzhkov. Leaders of union and republican ministries and departments presented reports. Reports on what has been done during the 24 hours were presented by: USSR Minister Sizenko, first deputy chairman of the USSR State Agro-Industrial Committee; Shalayev, AUCCTU chairman; Batalin and Voronin, deputy chairmen of the USSR Council of Ministers; Sarkisyan, chairman of the republican Commission for Rendering Assistance to the Victims, and chairman of the Armenian SSR Council of Ministers; and Khodzhamiryan, deputy chairman of the Armenian SSR Council of Ministers.

This time the rural areas of the republic which suffered destruction were analyzed in great detail. It was noted that initially the State Agricultural Committees of the Armenian SSR and the USSR were disorganized and confused. Yesterday, once resolute measures were adopted, the situation began to change. Warm clothing, blankets, and tents have been sent to all rural areas which suffered especially during the earthquake. Portable radio transmitters have been set up in the rayon centers with military assistance.

[Passage omitted]

Yazov Participates in 14 Dec ACP CC Conference

[Editorial Report] Moscow KRAYNAYA ZVEZDA published in the first edition for 14 December 1988 on page 1 a TASS account of a Conference of the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party devoted to disaster-relief following the earthquake in Armenia. The participants included Gorbachev, Ryzhkov, Slyunkov, Yazov, Batalin, Voronin, Shcherbina, Shalayev and Mironenko [listed in that order].

Several comments by Gorbachev to Yazov and by Yazov are reported:

"One must not lose sight of the fact, Mikhail Sergeyevich noted, turning to D.T. Yazov, that soldiers called into the army from these areas are striving to come to the aid of those close to them. It is necessary to give them leave."

...

"At the conference D.T. Yazov reported on assistance provided by the Soviet Army. 150 heavy transport aircraft are in the air or at airfields. A significant portion of them arrived with cranes. Soldiers have deployed 150 mobile kitchens in Leninakan alone and have distributed 150 large tents. The cranes are served by 60 fuel tankers. Two construction detachments are participating in removing obstructions."

...

"M.S. Gorbachev stated: ...If D.T. Yazov within a day or a day and a half knows how to assure the restoration of communications in the disaster areas—it will be very good."

**Armenian Servicemen on Emergency Leave
Arriving in Area**
*PM1512101588 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
15 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 6*

[Report by correspondents S. Bablumyan and S. Tarakov: "Seven Days After the Earthquake. Our Special Correspondents Report From Armenia"]

[Text] Having barely recovered from the shock, one begins to notice other things. Today, when not all the survivors have yet been rescued, when not all those who perished have yet been pulled out of the rubble, many problems remain hidden, as it were. Tomorrow, however, they will appear in all their complexity and take on a "human" hue and content. We have decided to dwell on some of them in our latest reportage.

Men in military uniform are in evidence today on every road in Armenia. We are not referring to those who, forgetting about sleep and rest, are doing their difficult job. Servicemen drafted into the Armed Forces from Armenia are making their way home by train, air, or hitchhiking, everyone as best he can. They have been allowed to go home by order of the country's defense minister. Alas, at this terrible time, the word "home" has lost its original meaning for many of them....

As soon as disaster struck, Colonel L. Dadamyants, chief of the political department of the republic military commissariat, told us, family and friends of those who perished or suffered in the earthquake turned to us. Cables were dispatched to all military districts, groups of forces, and fleets where boys drafted from the disaster area were serving. It must be said that some commanders took the decision to let the servicemen go independently,

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without waiting for instructions. Many military commissariats are sending us money so that aid may be given to servicemen's families and others who have suffered in the earthquake.

[Passage omitted]

Editorial note: The truly selfless work of the servicemen in rescuing people and the contribution to this cause by the Air Force remain to be evaluated. However, we would like to thank the leadership of the Air Force, the command of the military transport aviation, its flight personnel, and the staff of operational control centers for their assistance in promptly conveying IZVESTIYA special correspondents to the disaster zone.

Work on Communications System Still Incomplete

*PM1512101688 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
15 Dec 88 Second Edition p 1-2*

[TASS report under the rubric "In the CPSU Central Committee Politburo Commission" under the general heading "Our Grief and Tragedy": "Time of Trial"]

[Excerpts] Difficulties must not be belittled, one must not allow self-deception, and one must not engage in wishful thinking—this is the main requirement with which the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission in Armenia is approaching any problem in cleaning up the aftermath of the disaster. After yesterday's flight over a number of rural areas and meetings with their inhabitants, the latest operations conference held on the morning of 14 December under the chairmanship of N.I. Ryzhkov substantially clarified the general picture. It turns out that there are 48 and not 28 settlements which suffered considerably as a result of the catastrophe. Assistance in equipment, food, and temporary housing to rural areas needs to be sharply increased. It has also been reported that some 300 people may still be buried under the ruins of the textile combine in Leninakan. The most powerful cranes and a large group of rescuers have been brought into action there to knock down the obstructions.

This and other information which characterizes the seriousness of the situation determined the businesslike and sometime heated nature of the conference. Reports on work done during the past 24 hours were delivered by the republic's Minister of Communications R.I. Avoyan, Deputy Chairmen of the USSR Council of Ministers Yu.P. Batalin and L.A. Voronin, Deputy USSR Minister of Installation and Special Construction Work V.F. Bryunin, First Deputy Minister of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry V.P. Trushin, Deputy Chairman of the USSR People's Control Committee V.I. Manayev, Deputy Chairman of the Republican Council of Ministers Yu.E. Khodzhamiryan, and AUCCTU Chairman S.A. Shalayev.

It was noted that communications have not yet been reestablished in rural areas and that, as before, the shortage of food and essential supplies is being felt. In some villages people have no shelter from inclement weather. On the commission's instruction 256 trucks carrying medicine, warm clothing, blankets, and food supplies have been urgently dispatched to these regions. Union and republican ministries of communications have been charged with deploying truck-mounted telephone exchanges in each rayon center within 3 days and repairing all cable and radio relay lines and preparing them for use. Forty of the truck-mounted exchanges are arriving today at rayon centers, and 56 more are on the way. The commission has requested that the ministries of communications of the USSR and of the republic reestablish communications with the help of the military during the next few days in all 117 population centers.

In the past few days, 116 cranes of various sorts, including heavy duty cranes, have been brought to Leninakan, Kirovakan, and Spitak. Power-generating equipment is being brought into operation. Already 75 of the 316 substations of Leninakan have been put back in operation. Half of the town has lighting. The power-generating system of Spitak was completely destroyed, but electricity is now being transferred from the nearest substations on temporary circuits. Railroad track on the Leninakan-Kirovakan section has been repaired. The repair of live circuits is being completed here, two special trains with technical equipment on board are being prepared for departure.

Additional civil defense divisions to take part in clearing obstructions and search for people have arrived in Leninakan and Spitak. The number of mine rescue specialists has risen to 900.

[Passage omitted]

Defense Minister: Airborne Troops in Spitak

*LD1512183688 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
1600 GMT 15 Dec 88*

[Text] The country's Armed Forces are giving great assistance to the rescue, repair, and restoration work in the suffering Armenian regions. Their vital contribution in eliminating the consequences of the earthquake was noted at a meeting of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission. Our correspondent interviewed Yazov, member of the commission, USSR defense minister, candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, and Army general:

[Begin Yazov recording] The earthquake was of such a destructive force that not just some buildings but industrial buildings, works, factories, and combines—such as the flour-milling combine in Spitak, a combine for storing bread grain, for the production of mixed fodder—also collapsed.

RESCUE AND RELIEF EFFORT

The railway was destroyed literally at one sweep. The crater at the epicenter was up to 6 meters deep. The land simply opened up and disintegrated. It seems that at that moment a train was passing; all the carriages were strewn along the railway line itself to the sides, to the left and right. The live circuits and the substations were destroyed. Do you know that the railway has already begun to function again? Here there were no railway battalions; they arrived from other places and in 4 or 5 days or so restored the railway. At the moment two more railway battalions are on the way; they are going to work on the sidings so that carriages can be put there, carriages for those specialists—construction workers—who will come and live in them.

When the airborne troops arrived in Spitak and began to explore the school, and after they saw how many little children lay in the flattened classroom, they refused lunch and dinner and worked until they had extracted all the corpses. They also managed to save some who were alive. It is not known that the landing forces and other troops collected more than R3 million right on premises that had been destroyed from banks. A large amount of valuables, valued at R5 million, were piled up especially in the department store. These valuables will be returned to the state. [end recording]

Lt Gen Makashov Interviewed on Relief Efforts
*PM1612113188 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 16 Dec 88 First Edition p 1*

[Report on interview with Lieutenant General A. Makashov, military commandant of the special region, by TASS correspondents Yu. Kankanyan and O. Moskovskiy: "Just One Day"; date, place not given]

[Text] The life of the republic, subjected to a stern ordeal, is complex and varied. Here is what TASS correspondents were told by Lieutenant General A. Makashov, military commandant of the special region:

"The buildup of forces and facilities brought in to eliminate the consequences of the earthquake through USSR Defense Ministry channels continued 15 December. To this end up to 30,000 personnel, 770 units of engineering equipment, and 1,500 trucks have been put into operation.

"About 6,000 tents with room for over 100,000 people, 22,000 padded jackets and trousers (mainly for the rural regions), and thousands of hats with earflaps and warm mittens have been handed over for the permanent use of the population affected by the natural disaster. Hot food is being prepared at the army field kitchens.

"Subunits of the pipe-laying units have laid a field main pipeline with a capacity of 2,400 cubic meters of water a day to supply water to Spitak. Some seven mobile army refueling points have been deployed.

"During the clearing of the rubbish the troops collected valuables worth over R800,000. They have all been handed over to the appropriate organs.

"The situation in Yerevan and the rayons of the republic where a special situation and curfew have been established is being controlled by the troops. Over the past 24 hours the military commandants' posts service has checked 1,146 people, detained 179 for various reasons, and arrested 8. They checked 294 vehicles and detained 21. No firearms or cold weapons were discovered.

"At the same time it must be noted that in recent days criminal elements have been activated. There have been thefts, and private vehicles have been stolen. Instances of the embezzling of freight and medical supplies arriving at 'Zvartnots' airport have been noted. The military commandant's post has put the airport under guard.

"Citizens are particularly angered by cases of looting in the disaster regions. Thus, Leninakan inhabitants A. Avetisyan and S. Navasadryan stole a crate of oil and R200 at store No 15 of the Leninakan industrial goods trading organization. Together with militia workers, inhabitants of Nor-Adzhi village, Abovyan Rayon, on their way from Spitak Rayon to Aboyan, arrested canteen worker Kh. Ayvazyan, in whose possession they discovered and from whom they confiscated six pairs of women's shoes and other goods he had stolen from store while rendering aid in Spitak Rayon."

In just one day the servicemen and militiamen have had to resolve these questions in the regions which suffered from the earthquake.

40 Civilian, Military Aircraft Operating From Ukraine

*LD1212132088 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
0900 GMT 12 Dec 88*

[Excerpt] In Armenia, the elimination of the consequences of the disastrous earthquake continues. The main effort has been concentrated on clearing the obstructions and rescuing the victims as quickly as possible. The government commission is working around the clock. Aid is reaching Armenia from all the republics. About 40 civil and military aircraft are operating an airlift between the Ukraine and Armenia. They have already delivered to Leninakan some 50 powerful cranes, urgently needed to clear rubble.

[Passage omitted]

Announcement of Military Il-76 Crash at Leninakan

*LD1112155688 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
1530 GMT 11 Dec 88*

[Text] From the CPSU Central Committee, the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, and the USSR Council of Ministers: As it was approaching the airport for Leninakan in the Armenian SSR, an Il-76 military transport plane crashed. Nine members of the crew and 70 soldiers sent to Leninakan to help in the earthquake relief effort were killed.

With a feeling of grief and sympathy, we express our deep condolences to the families of those who died, who hurried to the aid of the fraternal Armenian people and earned the eternal gratitude of the Soviet people.

Details on Numbers of Military Aircraft, Types of Cargo

*LD1212180788 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
1600 GMT 12 Dec 88*

[Interview with Vladimir Trofimovich Danilchenko, deputy chief of the Air Force Central Command Post, by Aleksandr Nikitovich Zhetvin over the telephone—live or recorded]

[Text] [Zhetvin] Now, comrades, we have Colonel Vladimir Trofimovich Danilchenko, deputy chief of the Air Force Central Command Post, on the phone. Vladimir Trofimovich?

[Danilchenko] Yes, Aleksandr Nikitovich. Allow me...

[Zhetvin, interrupting] Can you hear me? Could we have today's information?

[Danilchenko] The soldiers of the Armed Forces, just like the entire Soviet people, including the Air Force, are taking this tragedy hard and have responded to our leadership's call for offering assistance to the people in

Armenia. Today, in accordance with the plan, more than 115 aircraft of the military transport aviation are carrying out their tasks. Air Force pilots must carry out their tasks both day and night.

[Zhetvin] Vladimir Trofimovich, what is the principal cargo?

[Danilchenko] Right now we are transporting cranes. We believe that is the principal item needed in these conditions; cranes are needed to clear the collapsed buildings. Seventy-nine aircraft have fulfilled this task for today. More than 40 cranes have been delivered to Yerevan today alone, 23 cranes have been delivered to Leninakan, and aircraft are continuing flights to those points.

[Zhetvin] Do you have any orders for tomorrow?

[Danilchenko] Tomorrow we plan to use more than 120 aircraft. The cargo will be the same: cranes and tents from all over the Soviet Union. The cargo...

[Zhetvin, interrupting] Vladimir Trofimovich, excuse me, you are not just delivering such important cargo in the situation as cranes, but presumably you are also evacuating injured people?

[Danilchenko] Naturally. So far we have evacuated more than 1500 civilians. We have also transported 7000 men into Armenia to render assistance...

[Zhetvin, interrupting] I see.

[Danilchenko] We are transporting large quantities of medicines, a mobile hospital, and other technical equipment. Apart from that we have flown in two power generating stations and now under the plan we are to transport three power generating stations there to provide assistance for the population and to support the work of the people who have been sent to Yerevan.

[Zhetvin] That, comrades, was a report from Col Vladimir Trofimovich Danilchenko, deputy chief of the Air Force Central Command Post. Vladimir Trofimovich, thank you for your information.

Col Gen Pankin: Commission To Investigate Crash

*LD1212092888 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
0830 GMT 12 Dec 88*

[Text] Many of our radio listeners are asking for more precise information about the circumstances of the catastrophe surrounding the Il-76 military transport plane as it approached the airport in the town of Leninakan. As a result of our enquiry, and in addition to information already broadcast, Colonel General of Aviation Pankin, commander in chief of the Air Forces, has reported that the plane was flying to the disaster region from an airfield outside Baku. Army engineers were on board.

MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT

The reasons for the catastrophe are being investigated by a commission that has been specially set up. There will be an additional report.

Ministry of Defense Commission on Crash Set Up

*LD1212175988 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
1530 GMT 12 Dec 88*

[Excerpts] A news conference was held in Moscow today in connection with the earthquake in Armenia. Journalists were addressed by Panyukov, first deputy minister of civil aviation; Voznesenskiy, head of the USSR Council of Ministers' Information Department; Bibin, first deputy chairman of the USSR State Construction Committee; and Nikiforov, deputy foreign minister. Here is what they spoke about.

[Begin recording] [Panyukov] On 7 December, following the report of the tragedy in Armenia, a headquarters under the command of the minister of civil aviation was formed in the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The whole ministry has gone onto an around-the-clock schedule, without interruption, as have all its territorial directorates. The whole of the air fleet, both passenger and all cargo aircraft, have been put into action to render assistance to the Armenian people.

As early as 7 December we started delivering medical staff, doctors, from all of our country's airports. On 7 December Comrade Yevgeniy Ivanovich Chazov, minister of health, flew out from Vnukovo. More than 100 doctors and medical staff from Moscow went with him. Medical staff were delivered from other cities—Leningrad, Kiev and other cities of our country.

All organizations of the Soviet Union, all collectives, are giving a great deal of help. In recent days we have carried a very great deal of blood, medicines, foodstuffs, tents, and warm clothing; and this work is continuing. I can say that up to the present hour we have already done more than 200 flights on IL-86, TU-154 and IL-76 aircraft, and have delivered more than 10,000 specialists. These include doctors, medical staff, mining rescue teams, construction specialists and builders, and electrical engineers, who are giving Armenia help.

[Passage omitted].

[Panyukov] On 11 December, the day of the crash of the IL-76 airplane, civil aviation was looking after air control. The first impressions are that guidance was implemented competently and all right. The crew of the IL-76 airplane of the military transport command was provided with all the necessary conditions to implement its final approach—the condition of the aerodrome and the weather conditions. The crew began its approach normally, there were not deviations. In the area of the third turn—that is, going from the third to the fourth turn—the blip on the radar disappeared. The crashed plane was found after a search, but everybody had died. A commission has been

appointed by the Ministry of Defense, bringing in specialists from civil aviation (?and Gosaeronadzor), and it is carrying out an investigation at present. As to any causes, we simply do not have any information so far.

[Passage omitted]

[end recording]

Announcements on Il-76 Crash

*18010281 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian
13 Dec 88 First Edition p 1*

[Announcements by the CPSU Central Committee and the Ministry of Defense and the Main Political Directorate]

[Text]

From the CPSU Central Committee, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the USSR Council of Ministers:

An Il-76 military transport aircraft crashed on 11 December while approaching Leninakan Airport (Armenian SSR). Nine crewmembers and 69 servicemen, who were bound for Leninakan to participate in earthquake relief efforts, were killed.

It is with a feeling of sorrow and compassion that we express deep sympathy to relatives and friends of the deceased, who were hastening to the aid of the fraternal Armenian people and who deserve the everlasting gratitude of the Soviet people.

Signed by the CPSU Central Committee, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the USSR Council of Ministers

From the USSR Ministry of Defense and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy

The USSR Ministry of Defense and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy report with deep sorrow that an Il-76 military transport aircraft crashed on 11 December while approaching Leninakan Airport (Armenian SSR). Nine crewmembers and 69 servicemen, who were bound for Leninakan to participate in earthquake relief efforts, were killed.

It is with a feeling of sorrow and compassion that the USSR Ministry of Defense and the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy express deep sympathy to relatives and friends of the deceased, who were hastening in the performance of their military duty to the aid of the Armenian people. The fond memory of the faithful sons of the fatherland will remain forever in the hearts of Army and Navy soldiers, and of all Soviet people.

TV Report on Crashes, Transport

LD1312235988 [Editorial Report] Moscow Television Service in Russian at 1800 GMT on 13 December, in its "Vremya" newscast, broadcasts a report by correspondent G. Sedov on the work of Air Force pilots who are flying freight into Armenia. The program begins with a shot of Sedov at a snowbound airport interviewing the commander of one of the aircraft. The commander says he is transporting a crane and 20 tonnes of foodstuffs, as well as workers to help in the work in Armenia. The commander also says that about 300 heavy transport aircraft are involved in flying freight into Armenia.

Sedov then interviews Military Air transport commander V.V. Yefanov who says that so far 249 cranes, 30 excavators, and a large quantity of other equipment has been sent to Yerevan and Leninakan. The only problem is that the airports slow things down due to insufficient capacity, but things are getting better all the time.

Sedov then asks Yefanov: "Could you explain the causes of these two aircraft crashes?" Yefanov replies: "As far as our aircraft is concerned, it was nothing to do with the aviation equipment; the equipment is reliable and works perfectly. And any rumors to the effect that they were flying without sufficient fuel, or that something else happened have no truth whatsoever." He goes on to say: "There is great intensivity of flights in the area of the airports, which are in mountainous areas. Leninakan airport is at a height of 1,524 meters, so descent to the runway is made more difficult. Furthermore, there are virtually no landing lights in this region, and the flight was carried out at night. We have no other precise information at present. Once the commission has made its inquiries, the appropriate conclusions will be drawn."

Mar Avn Yefimov on Crash, Air Transport Effort
PM1312193588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
14 Dec 88 First Edition p 6

[V. Chebakov "Reportage From Air Force Central Command Post. The Zone Is Open to Aircraft"]

[Text] 12 December, 1500 hours. The office of Marshal of Aviation A.N. Yefimov, Air Force commander in chief.

Give us aircraft as a priority!—someone's irritated voice can be heard shouting into the receiver of the government communication line. And then, more calmly: Comrade Marshal Aleksandr Nikolayevich, please understand, it is the republic that is asking....

Such telephone calls have been coming in for the past 4 days from various parts of the country, Yefimov says. People's emotional stress is deeply disturbing, but the order is to give priority to deliveries of heavy equipment

to Armenia—cranes, bulldozers, excavators. ...The planning and allocation of aircraft and the supervision of their use is in the hands of Colonel General of Aviation V. Pankin, chief of the Air Force Main Staff.

[Chebakov] How many military transport aircraft are currently being used to deliver goods to the disaster zone?

[Pankin] More than 300, including An-124's, Il-76's, An-22's, and An-12's. You know, I can admit that in almost 50 years of service in the Air Force, I have never experienced such a critical situation. So many aircraft in the air in one restricted area! The airports in Yerevan and Leninakan are simply not capable of accommodating such a large number of heavy aircraft. Nor are civil aviation staff used to such a tremendous load. We are now working together. Operational groups have been set up, we are constantly transmitting information on which aircraft and where are waiting for permission to take off, at what airfields they are based... [Pankin ends]

I learn that one of the "Ruslans" is being unloaded in Yerevan. The giant aircraft has delivered three powerful cranes from the Liebherr company in Stuttgart. Another such plane is leaving for London tomorrow to fetch a batch of prefabricated panel houses.

In this case, Aleksandr Nikolayevich says, I must say a word of praise for the USSR Foreign Ministry staff. Our pilots are flying foreign missions without service passports. A year ago it would have been difficult to imagine anything like this.

[Chebakov] Aleksandr Nikolayevich, how did our Il-76 crash?

[Yefimov] A special commission is conducting an investigation. It will reveal the actual cause. What can I tell you in the meantime? It is difficult to fly in Armenia. I myself served there at one time. There are the mountains, complex meteorological conditions. And the pilots were eager to deliver goods at any price. At times it was necessary to simply restrain them. According to specialists, it is possible that the aircraft commander, Captain Nikolay Brilev, class-I military pilot, made a mistake. The following is a possible scenario. The atmospheric pressure of the airfield is set on the altimeter. At low altitude airports it is 760mm. However, Leninakan airport is located at an altitude of 1,500 meters above sea level. The air pressure there is 634mm. Even if the commander had set it at 734mm, for instance, the error in altitude would amount to more than 1,000 meters. He made visual contact with the airport and started the descent. Below and ahead was impenetrable darkness. A mountain in the flight path, and the mistake in altitude played its fatal role. They were on their way to help people and lost their own lives... [Yefimov ends]

1530 hours. Central Command Post.

MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT

I arrived together with the chief of the TsKP [Central Transportation Committee], Major General of Aviation L. Chervyakov. There is an expression in the Army—a situation approaching frontline conditions. It seemed inappropriate at that moment because it was a truly frontline situation. Maps, charts, graphs, lit up panels, about 10 telephones ringing at once. People were working under pressure.

Duty shifts now run for 36 hours rather than 24 hours, Leonid Mikhailovich told me. Staffing has been increased by 50 percent. A mass of questions has to be resolved. At the moment, for instance, 1 "Ruslan," 23 AN's, and 60 IL-76's are on their way. The rest are being loaded. During the first 2 days we had special problems with unloading. It was taking too long, between 3-5 hours. The situation has improved now, we are down to 40-50 minutes.

The "Duty General," Major General of Aviation A. Avdeyev, told me that on the night of 11-12 December 97 aircraft were waiting for permission to take off for Yerevan and Leninakan at Transcaucasian airports. But the weather was constantly letting them down. From 0500 hours to 1000 hours a fog descends and visibility is poor. The best time from 1000 hours to 1800 is, of course, allocated to foreign aircraft—C-130's, C-5A's, DC-8's. And the bad time—the night, morning, and dusk is allocated to military transport aircraft.

By 1600 hours on Monday 129 heavy cranes, 39 excavators, 122 special trucks, 22 tractors, a blood transfusion station, some 300 tonnes of medical equipment, 79 tonnes of food, and 5,985 rescue workers, medics, and other helpers had been delivered to the disaster zone and Yerevan.

Colonel Igor Nechayev is talking about the weather. Luckily, it promises to be favorable during the next few days—calm with good visibility. The disaster zone is open to aircraft.

1800 hours. 110 aircraft are on their way with goods for the disaster area...

Further Details on Il-76 Crash, Rail Reconstruction

PM1212200088 Moscow *IZVESTIYA* in Russian
13 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 6

[Roundup of special correspondents' and unattributed reports on Armenian earthquake aftermath: "Lessons in Mercy"]

[Excerpts] [Report by special correspondents S. Bablyan, M. Krushinskiy, A. Protsenko, and S. Taranov] Yerevan, 12 Dec—[Passage omitted] There are already more than 6,000 victims in the hospitals of Armenia, especially Yerevan, today. The doctors are doing everything possible to save the lives of even the seemingly

absolutely hopeless cases. More than 2,600 highly complex operations have been carried out. But by noon on 12 December 200 people had died in Yerevan's clinics....

Death continues its terrible harvest. After our own Il-76 military transport plane, in which 78 people died, this morning a Yugoslav aircraft, also on its way to give help, crashed 12 km from Yerevan. The crew of seven were killed.

This tragic news was flashed around Armenia and caused a new wave of grief: Our brothers were hurrying to our assistance, and they themselves were killed. Every Armenian, every Soviet person bows his head low to the memory of the new victims of the tragedy.

How could these losses happen? Because the air above Armenia is as crowded as the land. At times dozens of aircraft are in the air, waiting their turn to land. The weather has deteriorated sharply. It snowed in Spitak last night, and in Leninakan it rained.

This has severely exacerbated the already difficult situation. But in the last 24 hours alone another 64 survivors were brought out from the ruins in Leninakan, and 20 in Spitak. How many more will be saved? No one knows. It is calculated that at the time of the earthquake in Spitak alone there were at least 16,000 people in schools and hospitals and at enterprises, in short, under roofs that proved treacherously unsafe. Let us remember that just over 20,000 people lived in this little rayon center in all. The devastation is great in the countryside too. As yet only 6,000 people have been evacuated from Spitak Rayon, whose population totaled 50,000. Mainly, of course, these are the injured, old people, children, and women. [passage omitted]

On Monday morning N.I. Ryzhkov, chairman of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo Commission, addressed the participants in an operations conference at the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee. Leaders of many union ministries and departments and, of course, the Armenian SSR were present. They discussed the progress of rescue operations and today's most urgent matters. And—although colossal work is being done—regrettable facts emerged. The representative of the USSR Ministry of Installation and Special Construction Work does not know where to send the heavy cranes that have been made available to him, and sends them to the wrong places. One local leader who is responsible for the safe keeping of jewelry and other valuables in the affected regions has not yet organized the work of shipping them out. Why not? "We were only told yesterday that they had to be shipped out"...

In some places people are not receiving the most basic essentials. In some places the elementary removal of refuse has not been organized, in some places the law

enforcement organs are not allowing the dead to be buried, insisting on the observance of cumbersome procedural details as if they did not understand the dangers of delay...

Of course, people are exhausted, this is the first time they have experienced anything like this, there are bound to be blunders, all that is true... But how long will we go on waiting for someone to give us instructions, even in the direst emergencies? Is even an earthquake not enough to awaken our capacity to think for ourselves and take unconventional decisions?

We are deliberately refraining from naming here the leaders who were subjected to sharp criticism at the conference. After all, the point is not to give someone another "dressing down." But it is time to shake off the numbness of the first days, overcome the shock, and begin to work in an organized manner, coolly. The vast majority are doing precisely this. What is needed is for everyone to do so.

[Passage omitted]

From the Latest Reports

[Unattributed report] [Passage omitted]

Ministry of Railways: The main work of delivering the freight being sent to Armenia from all over the country has fallen on the railmen's shoulders.

"On Saturday we dispatched 4,260 freightcars, and about the same number on Sunday," First Deputy Minister G. Fadeyev says. "Shipments have increased almost eightfold compared with before the earthquake. At present 163 trains are on the move, on their way to the disaster area. Naturally, it is physically impossible to accept and process such a vast quantity of freight in a short time. But the situation demands speedy unloading. Therefore it has been decided to build an additional 30 km of railroad tracks in the region of Leninakan station. This involves all kinds of sidings, platforms, and spur lines. All this will be done in the near future by servicemen, railmen, and construction workers.

"Efficiency in organizing shipments is paramount. Our headquarters and control room, which are working around the clock, have set up a link with the Gossnab. From there we receive information on priority loads being sent from a particular city. Special teams sort the freight on the approaches to Armenia. Fuel, motorized tractor equipment, housing, and food are dispatched first.

"Movement on the main Tbilisi-Yerevan line will be restored by 15 December. In some places 70,000 cubic meters of rubble is blocking the track bed. Individual boulders weigh 20 or 30 tonnes."

Air Force: Lieutenant General of Aviation V. Yefanov, commander of Air Force military transport aviation, tells us about the circumstances of the loss of the IL-76 plane:

"The disaster took place 15 km from Leninakan airport, where the IL-76 flight, which started from Baku, was heading. On board were 70 civil defense officers and men. There was a crew of nine, commanded by Captain N. Blilev: Senior Lieutenant I. Razumnyy, Captain I. Sokolov, Captain V. Plashkin, Senior Lieutenant S. Ivlev, Ensigns I. Shcherkov and A. Rybalchenko, Major I. Avilov, Captain A. Altukhov..."

"A special commission is investigating the circumstances of the crash. At the moment the following can be said reliably. At 0622 hours Moscow time, while making a turn, the plane hit the ground. Dawn is at 0645 in that locality. Night is no obstacle to flights, but because of the extraordinary circumstances in the disaster area the city and its suburbs are not illuminated. Aircraft are approaching Leninakan and landing literally one after another. The airport, which is at an altitude of 1,524 meters above sea level, is overloaded. The mountains complicate the conditions for flying close to the ground."

[Unidentified questioner] "Have restrictions on flights been lifted or relaxed because of the emergency situation?"

[Yefanov] "No, the ordinary restrictions that are customary in the Air Force concerning weather and visibility are in force...."

Report From Yerevan's Zvartnots Airport

LD1312070688 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
0500 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Excerpt] The 6th day of rescue work in the areas hit by the natural disaster is underway. Our correspondents, Yuriy Korotkov and Khuryun Khomaryan, report by phone from Yerevan:

[Khomaryan] Well, I think I'll begin with Yerevan's Zvartnots Airport. I was there all evening yesterday with Yuriy Korotkov, and the airport was working at maximum capacity. Heavy vehicles from the civil aviation and the Air Force are landing literally every 5 minutes. Students, servicemen, and workers from adjacent enterprises have been mobilized to unload them. Medical apparatus, preparations, lifting devices, and special detachments of rescue-workers are all going on in a steady stream. However, when you get to the disaster area, you can see that all this is not yet enough. People are in Leninakan are literally snatching the cranes that come in from Yerevan from one another. I do understand them. There under the rubble remain their children, relatives, and friends. The field telephone at the headquarters of the Spitak Raykom is literally being over-strained. Cranes are needed, dump-trucks are needed, mobile electricity stations are needed, tents are

needed. Not the large ones the field hospitals have, and the first aid post, but small ones, for one, two, or three families. After all, people don't leave the ruins of their houses, day or night. And how could you abandon it when your family's there? Or go away until you've raked away all those heaps down to the very last stone? It is particularly difficult to work with the onset of darkness. The ruins have to be lit up by car lights or just by fires. Every minute is precious because every minute takes away human lives.

[Passage omitted]

DOSAAF Aircraft, Maintenance Personnel from BAM Sent to Aid Disaster Relief Effort

*18010289b Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian
16 Dec 88 First Edition p 1*

[Articles by Maj G. Khudinskiy and S. Maykov, "Into the Disaster Area"]

[Text] [Maj G. Khudinskiy] Soldiers of the railroad troops from the Eastern Section of the Baykal-Amur Rail Mainline were saddened by news of the earthquake in Armenia. Relief staffs have been created everywhere. For example Lieutenant Colonel M. Sidorovich took command of one of them. Just soldiers of our unit alone contributed around 10,000 rubles to the victim relief fund. This was money from savings of the servicemen and earnings from extra work days. Clothing packages for victims have been sent to Leninakan on the initiative of the women's councils.

One other thing: Forty-eight military railroad workers having work experience with the mainline's stations and sidings left for the disaster area to provide assistance in operating the Transcaucasian Railway in the Kirovakan-Leninakan section.

[S. Maykov] An airplane of the USSR Central Aeroclub imeni V. P. Chkalov took off yesterday on a special run to Yerevan. It will deliver tents, bedding and other basic necessities allocated by the DOSAAF Central Committee to the earthquake victims. A group of sports parachute jumpers was sent on that airplane to work in hard-to-reach places. All of them are USSR masters of sports and participants of the Arctic Ekspark Expedition.

A column of heavy trucks has also been sent to Armenia from Moscow. The best driving instructors of the capital's DOSAAF motor vehicle schools will bring prefabricated houses manufactured at the defense society's enterprises to the disaster area.

552 Military Air-craft Participate in Disaster Effort

*18010289a Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian
16 Dec 88 First Edition p 4*

[Article by Col V. Seledkin, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent, and Lt Col S. Gorevalov: "Air Bridge"]

[Text] Crew commander Captain Viktor Leskov spoke evenly:

"Take-off will be on schedule, board the shuttle for the airplane."

After the warmth of the flight control center the morning cold on the streets seemed especially bitter. It was also cold in the cargo cabin of the Il-76, which had cooled down over the night. Part of the cabin was occupied by a bus, with the rest of the space being filled with crates, bags and cardboard boxes. Carefully making our way through them, with some difficulty we managed to find some room for ourselves. We could not help recalling what Captain V. Leskov said to us half an hour ago:

"Try to take as much food and medicine as you can. Armenians who had suffered from the earthquake need them especially right now."

Captain Leskov and his comrades were aware of this not from just hearsay. The crew had made its first flight to Armenia on the very day following the disastrous subterranean tremor. Together with other aircraft the Il-76 military transporter was helping to create a gigantic air bridge. Equipment, food and clothing moved toward the stricken areas and specialists were delivered over it in a wide flow.

"Around 800 military transport aircraft are taking part in assistance to Armenian laborers, who underwent a difficult trial," said air force commander-in-chief Marshal of Aviation A. N. Yefimov in a talk with us prior to the flight. "The cranes, excavators, food and drugs being delivered by aviators are helping to hasten recovery from the consequences of the earthquake, and to save many human lives."

We landed in Armenia. At Zvartnots Airport we saw aircraft landing on the concrete landing strip one behind the other. The sky above the airport was filled with the roar of engines. We met crew commander Major Yuriy Petrov next to one of the airplanes. His An-22 delivered truck-mounted cranes and food to Yerevan. This was the fifth time the crew had traveled the familiar route. And each such flight was a difficult examination for the aviators.

"I had been in Afghanistan twice, and I saw what I used to think were major difficulties, but what I've experienced here is no better," said helicopter commander Captain Aleksandr Tenzin.

We talked with him after flying over Leninakan and Spitak in the helicopter. The sight of the ruins pained our hearts. And Captain Tenzin had seen them within the very first hours, before the dust had even settled, while smoke billowed over the destruction. Casualties were loaded into his helicopter in those first hours, to be delivered to Yerevan.

All of the hopes were laid on the helicopter pilots, on their proficiency and endurance. But this task was not beyond the crew. The helicopter commander Captain A. Tenzin, navigator Captain S. Muratov and flight technician Senior Lieutenant I. Sinchuk had acquired rigorous experience in the Afghan sky. Captain A. Tenzin had been awarded two orders of the Red Star, and the courage of S. Muratov and I. Sinchuk had been marked by a "For Combat Service" Medal.

Now the aviators were once again on the forward edge. They had to deliver food and medicine to the inhabitants of remote settlements.

We did not return to Yerevan until late at night. But as before, Zvartnots Airport was filled with the roar of the engines of military transport aircraft. The air bridge was functioning without interruption.

From the editor. The following was reported to our correspondent by the Political Directorate at Air Force Main Headquarters:

As of 0600 hours on 14 December, 437 military airplanes and 115 helicopters had been committed from 40 airfields to render assistance to Armenia; 680 airplane and 808 helicopter sorties have been flown. Cranes continue to be the priority cargo. Two hundred-fifty have already been delivered by air. Money is still being collected for the victims. Over 1,800,000 rubles have already been collected for Armenia in the air force. More than 10,000 aviators have donated blood. The crew of the Il-76 headed by Major Viktor Konstantinovich Fedoseyev had returned from Afghanistan quite recently. The men needed to rest, but they immediately joined the effort to help the earthquake victims. On 18 December this Il-76 evacuated over 60 casualties, women and children to Kiev from Yerevan. As they approached their destination the aviators were ordered to fly to an alternate airfield—Kiev was closed by weather. The airplane assumed a course to its home airfield, reporting its decision to it by radio. The command and volunteers of the air unit, particularly Svetlana Mikhaylovna Kulbed and other members of the women's council, were quickly notified. The women prepared hot food, warm clothing and accommodations. When the airplane landed, the passengers were received in a way that made it seem as if a long time had been put into the preparations. S. Karshutyan expressed heart-felt thanks for the warm welcome in behalf of the arrivals.

It should be noted that the women's council is making a most active contribution to the effort to help the casualties. This is manifested in many directions. Here is just one fact. On learning that privates M. Agamesyan, A. Manukyan and M. Tatavasyan were leaving from the air unit for home, the chairman of the women's council and her friends gave them several suitcases filled with clothing, underwear and footwear.

11004

Description of Operations at Main Air Traffic Control Center

18010290 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian
17 Dec 88 First Edition p 4

[Article by Col A. Garavskiy, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent: "The Air Bridge: From the Whole World to Armenia"]

[Text] I am at the Main Center of the USSR Unified Air Traffic Control System (GTs UVD). Things are busy here as it is on normal days, and now that around 800 sorties are being flown each day just to provide assistance to Armenia, the intensity and volume of the work have grown significantly.

"Things were especially difficult in the first days of the disaster," admits GTs UVD chief Major General of Aviation K. Machavarnami, "but we've now managed to get into the swing of it. The people are devoting themselves completely, they are working selflessly. The dispatchers need to remember many things, particularly the weather along the routes and the take-off and landing points, the capability the airfields have for receiving airplanes, and the nature of the cargo. Thus we recently had to put a temporary restriction on the airports at Yerevan and Leninakan from 2200 to 0900 hours so that 70 cranes needed there could be delivered and unloaded on priority. A total of more than 300 of them were delivered by air."

Colonel N. Levochkin, chief of a duty shift at the GTs UVD, regularly receives summaries. I asked Nikolay Mikhaylovich to acquaint me with the situation as of the moment of our interview. This is what it was: There were three An-22s and three Il-76s in the air en route to Yerevan. Three An-22s, 17 Il-76s and one An-124 were ready for take-off. Four airplanes were ready to fly to Leninakan, but the airport had been shut down temporarily due to weather.

"What was the most difficult thing today, Nikolay Mikhaylovich?"

"Superheavy cranes capable of lifting loads of up to 120 tons had to be loaded aboard two Ruslans at a certain suburban Moscow airfield. The floor of the cargo compartment could not hold their weight (around 72 tons). An An-12 was immediately flown to Kiev, and structures with which to reinforce the floor were sent right back

from the Special Design Office imeni O. K. Antonov. The task was completed. And there was one other. A Ruslan lost an engine in the sky as it approached Koln. A decision was made for the airplane to return. It landed safely. Another Ruslan was launched in its place, by the way."

I spoke with dispatcher Lieutenant Colonel A. Logio about flights abroad. He has considerable flying experience, as incidentally do many other specialists here. The officer has Chernobyl and Afghanistan behind him.

"Here is the latest summary," Aleksandr Nikolayevich handed me a document. "Four Polish military transporters are presently flying a course to Armenia. One is presently being loaded. Four airplanes are being readied for flight from Czechoslovakia. Several of our military transporters are outside the country at the given moment. Two Il-76s and two Antons have taken off from Prague, and two Il-76s are being loaded. Three Soviet airplanes are being loaded in Belgrade, Tampere and London. Things are hardest for us when airplanes fly through the airspace of third countries. But our experience helps us to solve these complex

problems as well. And besides everything else, we need to concern ourselves with refueling abroad, with customs and with alternate airfields, and we need to monitor the weather conditions. I would like to extend a hearty thank-you to foreign associates helping us effectively solve all of these problems."

Yes, the responsibilities borne upon the shoulders of GTs UVD workers are of state importance. Being highly experienced specialists devoted to their profession, their comments are short and to the point, and they are modest. They are simply doing their work, they are carrying out their duty. And when after another of my questions specialists go back to leafing through volumes of paperwork in search of the required information, I can't help asking myself: Why is this so? Here it is, the end of the 20th century, and there is not a computer or any other modern office machine to be seen here. Even though this question has been raised on several occasions.

11004

Crowd Tries To Free Activists: 12 Soldiers Injured
*PM1312153188 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
14 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 6*

[Unattributed roundup of reports concerning the Armenian earthquake: "Latest News"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The USSR MVD press bureau reports: Against the background of Soviet peoples' universal efforts and readiness to extend a helping hand to the disaster victims, the attempts by certain extremist elements to drive wedges between the peoples of Armenia and Azerbaijan look particularly unacceptable. Under the influence of such persons, a group of between 100 and 300 citizens on 10 December in the central rayon of Yerevan put forward demands that aid not be accepted from Azerbaijan and that children not be allowed to be taken outside the republic.

Impeding the traffic, irresponsible persons among activists of the "Karabakh" committee attempted without authorization to remove buses from routes in the city, supposedly in order to take volunteers to the disaster region. Despite repeated demands by representatives of the military commandant and internal affairs organs' staffers that the illegal action cease, their illegal activity continued. Consequently 15 persons, including 6 members of the "Karabakh" committee, were detained for violating the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium decree of 23 November 1988.

On 11 December a crowd, egged on by activists of the "Karabakh" committee, attempted to free the detainees. But the measures that were taken dispersed the crowd. In the process 12 servicemen were injured.

Yerevan Military Commandant vs. 'Karabakh Committee'

*PM1312192788 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 14 Dec 88 First Edition p 2*

[Special correspondent Major O. Vladykin dispatch: "Instigators. Our Special Correspondent Reports From Yerevan"]

[Text] On 11 December in Yerevan a large group of city residents, in violation of the restrictions imposed by the curfew, staged an unsanctioned demonstration to demand the release of A. Akopyan, B. Araktsyan, K. Vartanyan, S. Gevorkyan, V. Manukyan, and L. Ter-Petrosyan, members and activists of the so-called "Karabakh" committee who had been detained under existing legislation.

The demonstrators were stopped by troop subunits and the militia near the intersection of Oktemberyan Boulevard and Nar-Dosa Street. They were told not to violate public order, to obey the ordinances introduced in the city, and to disperse. However, the repeated appeals had no effect. Moreover, certain activists of the so-called

"Karabakh" committee put forward inflammatory slogans. In response to the legitimate demands of the military command, the demonstrators began to stone the servicemen. The troop subunits were compelled to take all necessary measures to stop the illegal actions.

The military command and the Armenian SSR MVD called on the residents of Yerevan and the population centers where the curfew is in force not to succumb to the provocations and incitement, to strictly observe the established order, and to display prudence and high responsibility during these difficult days for our republic's people.

Lieutenant Colonel R. Karpov, commander of the guard sector, described what actually happened. The republican House of the Writers Union is located in the territory that he oversees. Hitherto this had been regarded as a quiet spot, so it had not attracted the attention of the military administration. However, from the morning of 10 December a crowd suddenly began to gather there. At first there were a few dozen people, and later hundreds. With every passing hour more and more people appeared. At 1600 hours Guards Lt Col R. Karpov and Guards Major S. Shagunov, his deputy for political affairs, drove up to the House of Writers and noticed that people were constantly going from the crowd into the building, returning later in a state of some excitement, and immediately finding themselves the center of attention among the gathering.

The officers too went into the building to find out the reason for the crowd of citizens. They looked in a few rooms and in one of them found a group of people who were discussing something in a businesslike fashion. They asked in whose presence they had the honor of finding themselves. And the reply they heard was:

"We are members of the 'Karabakh' committee."

"The 'Karabakh' committee was dissolved back in March by decision of the Armenian SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium...."

"Yes, there was such a decision," the people in the room mumbled. "Sorry about the slip of the tongue. We call ourselves the committee of the Karabakh movement of Armenia. No one has dissolved that yet."

"All right. Tell us then, is it you who have assembled those people outside the building?"

"No, they came of their own accord to discuss their problems and concerns. Who can forbid them that?"

The officers had to remind them that in conditions of the curfew it is forbidden to hold unsanctioned rallies, demonstrations, and meetings in the city streets and squares. The entire population of Yerevan, where no one has yet lifted the curfew, has been notified of this. And

Karpov told the committee members to use their proclaimed influence to advise the citizens to disperse to ensure that disturbances did not arise in the crowd, and that there was no need for the commander to take measures to stop them. The proposal seemed to be greeted with understanding.

Ashot Manucharyan, one of the leaders of the informal organization, came out into the street and read out the sector commandant's demand. People did indeed start to disperse, but...within a half-hour they had reassembled in even greater numbers.

Then Lieutenant General A. Makashov, who was appointed military commandant of Yerevan on 9 December, arrived at the House of Writers with a group of officers. This time he read out the demand to disperse to those present. And the same ploy was used again. At first they dispersed, but then they reassembled a little while later.

By 1900 the crowd was approximately a thousand-strong. Provocative shouts and abuse directed at the USSR Government and the Armed Forces rang out. Committee officials started to collect signatures for petitions of some kind. Leaflets appeared. Some of them found their way into officers' hands, are they were stunned by what they contained....

Guards Lieutenant Colonel Karpov showed me several copies of leaflets signed by the committee of the Karabakh movement of Armenia. At a time of great sorrow for the Armenian people, when the entire country and all Soviet people are making incredible efforts to save the victims of the earthquake, it is impossible to read these foul leaflets without trembling:

"...We urge agitprop organs and the mass media to show decency; there should be an end to the cheap and senseless propaganda of internationalism and an end to the trumpeting about the Azerbaijani government decision to send aid to Armenia."

So that's the way it is. The committee members, it transpires, don't need this conciliatory step. What has sympathy for the Armenian people—which they have so often accused the Azerbaijanis of lacking—to do with them? It is more beneficial and convenient for them to fuel dissension among people who have lived alongside each other for centuries. Even at a time when the hearts of thousands and thousands of Armenians are being rent by the pain of losing near and dear ones, when they are in great need of support, there are demagogues and adventurists for whom their kinsmen's sorrow is no way commensurate with their own ambitions.

"...We call on the central government not to use the Armenian people's tragedy to declare an all-union construction project and not to attempt to change the ethnic composition of Armenia."

Nationalist intoxication truly leads to Jesuitical logic. Let towns and cities be destroyed, let half a million people be left without a roof over their heads, so long as people are not reminded that it is possible to live peacefully, helping each other. How can you talk about any kind of morality here? There simply isn't any.

I wish to cite the names of those who have forgotten honor and conscience for the sake of their selfish ambitions. Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Samvel Gevorkyan, Karen Vartanyan, Aleksan Akopyan, Bobken Araktsyan, Vozgen Manukyan, Ashot Manucharyan. It was they and their henchmen who gathered at the House of Writers 10 December and prepared packages of provocative leaflets. They did not even shrink from using sacred maternal feelings for their unsavory purposes. They concocted the text of a letter to the USSR Government on behalf of the women of the republic, and went out among the crowd to collect signatures. What does the letter contain? There are complaints about slow rescue work and poor equipment availability in the disaster zone...followed by the statement: "We resolutely reject any assistance from the Azerbaijan SSR"; then arguments that the ecological situation in Armenia is bad; and then another statement: "We demand that rescued children be housed only within the borders of our republic."

I am confident that people will understand the military command in Yerevan, which decided to put an end to these arbitrary actions (what else can you call incitement among people who have experienced a terrible tragedy and are in an extremely agitated state?). Eighteen people caught committing provocative actions were detained in accordance with Article 1 of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium decree of 23 November 1988. This states that in localities and centers of population where a curfew has been imposed, people who fuel ethnic dissension through their actions...can be detained for up to 30 days under administrative procedures.

The detainees were taken to the nearest commandant's office from the House of Writers—the premises in Yerevan's Spandaryanskiy Rayon. In order to ascertain as quickly and objectively as possible the degree to which each of them was involved in the provocations, an investigation began immediately. For this the detainees were divided into two groups, and personal interrogations were conducted in each. I was allowed to be present during one of the interviews.

I will not go into the details of what I saw and heard. I will merely mention that the interrogation was conducted with extreme correctness. Guards Lt Col Karpov, who conducted it, and the officers who assisted him made every effort to avoid infringing the rights and dignity of the detainees, and were strictly guided by only the powers granted to them in connection with the operation of the curfew. Furthermore, it was obvious that the servicemen wanted to get to the bottom of what had happened.

When, for example, it became clear that Torgom Nalbalyan had found himself among the committee activists by accident, when he was trying to find a way through to where the ruins in the disaster zone were being excavated, he was told where he ought to turn for advice in such instances and immediately released. A detained woman was also sent home for humanitarian reasons, although there was a case against her.

There was also a case against Ashot Manucharyan. He made no secret of the fact that he belongs to the committee of the Karabakh movement of Armenia. And that he had edited the texts of those provocative leaflets. But he protested at being detained. He argued that he is an Armenian SSR Supreme Soviet deputy and enjoys deputy's immunity. Admittedly he was unable to provide the appropriate identification. So the sector commandant immediately took it upon himself to ascertain whether Manucharyan was a member of the organs of power. He telephoned for information and ascertained that there is indeed such a deputy. After this Ashot Garnikovich was told that the military administration had no power to detain him any longer. He was merely asked on behalf of the military command and for simple humanitarian reasons to use his authority as a deputy to help maintain public order at a time of nationwide mourning.

"I give you my oath that I will do everything possible for this," Manucharyan answered.

But the following morning soldiers discovered on the walls of many buildings announcements calling on Yerevan citizens to participate in unauthorized rallies. From 1000 the commandant's office started receiving alarming reports of attacks on military patrols. Groups of rampaging thugs were throwing rocks and sharpened sticks at them. Four soldiers from the MVD internal troops were taken to the hospital with severe injuries. Then a report came in that a military fuel tanker had been stopped in the city by a rampaging crowd several dozen strong. They had first showered the vehicle with rocks and broken the windows, and then they had dragged Ensign E. Minosyan and Private A. Biknadze out of the cab and started to beat them. Subsequently both of them also had to be taken to the hospital.

As midday approached the military commandant's office received a report of a large concentration of people at the railroad station. Somebody had been spreading an inflammatory rumor that a train to Yerevan had been attacked in Baku. The commandant's office duty officer immediately called the capital of the neighboring republic and then called representatives of the military transport service. The rumor proved to be false. A group of officers and soldiers headed for the station to restore order and calm people down. Then suddenly a new report came in. A column of demonstrators approaching

2,000-strong was heading toward V.I. Lenin Square from the House of Writers. They were chanting the slogans contained in the leaflets which had been seized the previous day.

I headed straight for the square. It was already cordoned off by soldiers. A soldier wearing earphones and carrying a radio was constantly relaying to an officer standing next to him reports from observation posts about the direction being followed by the column of demonstrators. An involuntary thought came to me: Who was leading them? Most of the members of the committee of the Karabakh movement had been detained for 30 days; only one had been released.... Then the soldier with the radio said something to Lieutenant Colonel Yegorov. He came up to me and said, not without bitterness: "One of the observation posts has just reported that Ashot Manucharyan has been spotted among the demonstrators."

Yerevan Commandant on Curfew, 'Renegades'
*LD1412195388 Moscow Television Service in Russian
1800 GMT 14 Dec 88*

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] Our correspondent has been speaking to Albert Mikhaylovich Makashov, commandant of Yerevan Special District:

[Begin recording] [Makashov] There is a need to maintain law and order at a time when many are prey to emotion and panic. That is why the curfew is still needed. At the same time, at this very difficult period for the republic and for the whole country, there remains a bunch of renegades who do not love their people and who only pay lip service to concern for their people and simultaneously continue their ignoble policy—that is how I would term it—toward their own people. Thousands of people uprooted from their homes, refugees and homeless evacuees, are now cursing both the Karabakh Committee and the hour when they came up with their slogans. Who needs it? That is why it remains necessary to maintain the curfew.

During these most difficult days, when all of the people and the entire country are working to find the injured—we have been dragging the living and the injured from the ruins even today—attempts to hold rallies and demonstrations and to spread obvious falsehood and disinformation are still with us in the city of Yerevan. That is why the law enforcement bodies and the Soviet Army still need to do a lot of work here. And with the help of all ordinary people, of the Soviet authorities [Sovetskaya vlast], of veterans, and of internationalist troops we are imposing order and we shall do everything in our power to ensure that the city is and remains tranquil.

[Correspondent] What steps are being taken against the instigators of these disorders, Albert Mikhaylovich?

[Makashov] The most serious measures prescribed by law, specifically by law. The law is the same for everyone. [end recording] [video shows Makashov and correspondent speaking in an office]

Karabakh Committee Sets Demonstrators Against Army

*NC1512091488 Yerevan Domestic Service in Russian
0630 GMT 15 Dec 88*

[From the review of KOMMUNIST]

[Text] We would like to draw your attention to the editorial article entitled "During These Decisive Days and Nights."

It says in part: There aren't enough words to explain how difficult the situation in our republic has become after the earthquake of such unprecedented force that struck the northern areas of Armenia. The dead and crippled run into tens of thousands and there are half a million without shelter, work, or school. On this background of universal concern and people's sorrow, states the paper, the demonstration held by certain leaders of the Karabakh Committee sounded like a harsh discordant note. In these tense days, so full of cares, how could they bring people out on the streets and attempt to set the army against the people, knowing full well that without the army and the selfless hard work of the soldiers, the volunteers in the disaster area would have had a very, very difficult time?

What are the limits of this unscrupulousness, this stupidity and narrow-mindedness? And who if not we should resist them in the name of the memory of the innocent victims, in the name of the future of our long-suffering, talented people?

Internal Troops Combat Looters, Confiscate Weapons

PM1412195388 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 First Edition p 6

[Interview with Lieutenant General V.S. Dubinyak, chief of staff of the Internal Troops, by unnamed PRAVDA correspondent: "Against the Backdrop of the Tragedy"; date, place not given; first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs subunits were the first to arrive in the parts of Armenia hit by the destructive force of the earthquake. Firefighters, servicemen, operational staff, without a thought for themselves, poured in to help people....

[Correspondent] However, even during the first day after the terrible tragedy it became obvious that the situation in a number of rayons in Armenia and Azerbaijan will make it necessary to recall the military subunits (and consequently also equipment and mechanisms) so badly needed in the disaster area. What made this necessary?

[Dubinyak] Yes, it is true, there are people who are trying to destabilize the situation which had, finally, begun to normalize. It has become clear that even such a terrible tragedy as that which has hit not only Armenia but our entire Soviet people has not been able to push into the background, even temporarily, their ambitious plans and subversive, extreme nationalist aims. On the border with Armenia equipment dispatched by the people of Azerbaijan has gotten "stuck." On the other hand, the complex situation prevailing in areas with a mixed population from both republics has not eased. The fact that in a number of places in Azerbaijan—it does not bear thinking about!—"congratulatory cables" were concocted and dispatched to the neighbors... could not fail to add fuel to the flames. Some people even celebrated the tragedy.

[Correspondent] We have also seen similar telegrams from the other side, doubting the Azerbaijanis' "sincerity in wanting to help."

[Dubinyak] Naturally it is a question of unscrupulous renegades, rather than the two peoples as a whole. However, I repeat, these renegades have been whipping up tension.... And they are doing so even now. They are being assisted in this by the Armenian Council of Ministers' extremely poor organization of the stock-taking of the goods that are arriving.

[Correspondent] As far as we know, a number of organizers of provocations in Yerevan have been detained. PRAVDA reported this yesterday. Nonetheless, drivers' delivery notes still sport the stamp of the long-banned "Karabakh" committee. Does this mean that its members are trying to place themselves above Soviet laws?

[Dubinyak] Precisely. Incidentally, they are stamping the notes with a specific purpose in mind. After all, it is necessary somehow to demonstrate their "involvement" in the nationwide efforts of the entire Soviet people. That is why they are stamping these documents, as if it were they who are sending the goods to the quake-stricken area, as if it were not the party but the "Karabakh" committee that is directing the rescue effort. A dirty farce against the backdrop of the tragedy... And, of course, hearsay, rumors, and fabrications abound again. Methods that have been rehearsed over the past 9 months.

[Correspondent] What exactly?

[Dubinyak] People connected with the "Karabakh" committee are spreading rumors alleging that the Army and Ministry of Internal Affairs troops are using the situation in order to completely enslave Armenia. They are saying that the soldiers are not working with shovels but with their rifle butts.

[Correspondent] However, is it not true that at the moment considerable forces are having to be diverted to perform law enforcement functions?

POLICE FUNCTIONS

[Dubinyak] Here are a few facts and figures: Within a relatively short spell, R130,511 worth of valuables has been confiscated from criminals detained—and certainly not by "Karabakh" committee members—in the Spitak and Kirovakan areas. Private V. Bushlakov confiscated R30,000 from one such criminal alone....

[Correspondent] Are these marauders?

[Dubinyak] No, only during wars are there marauders. However, as to the degree of their depravity, they are marauders. More than 150 of them have been identified. In all we have already returned valuables worth more than R250,000. There is clearly no need to explain the purpose and nature of our men's service. I would just like to add that they—and I am referring only to the Internal Troops subunits—have pulled from the rubble and rescued 656 people. And that while also guarding vitally important installations whose number runs into three figures.... And they are patrolling more than 50 routes.

Incidentally, our comrades have not heard a single insult from the Armenians currently working in the earthquake-striken area, who can see everything for themselves, who live by hard peasant labor, and who with their worldly wisdom are perfectly capable of distinguishing between truth and lies. On the contrary, they are sincerely grateful to the officers and men for their help and for maintaining law and order. The various insinuations, provocative gatherings, slogans on the lines of "Halt the Azerbaijanis' aid," and political speculation on problems have nothing in common with the real problems—all this is being staged by those indifferent to the people's suffering.... And frankly speaking, what appalls me most is that they either try to intimidate people or to corrupt them. Just take a look at the rate at which aid is arriving—goods, equipment, food... It is hard to keep up and put it all to use. Yet against the backdrop of this assistance, encroachments on state property have multiplied and transport disruptions are being deliberately organized. How low do you have to sink to loot a store against the backdrop of tens of thousands of deaths, against the backdrop of destruction, tears, and sorrow, which is what a certain Galetyan, detained by Lieutenant O. Markovskiy, has done. Can you picture the moral depravity of the people detained by the patrol detail comprising Senior Sergeant S. Nurdinov and Privates Vinkler and Romanovich: They were carrying sacks containing large quantities of shoes, men's vests and coats.... And that while servicemen O. Petinkin and I. Valenko were rescuing Lida Varanyan from the rubble and while Private Kovalenko, risking his own life, worked for 5 and ½ hours with his bare hands to free a woman from under dangerously overhanging debris.

Digging through the rubble, servicemen come across money and valuables and they return them to their owners. So, for instance, in Spitak Sergeant R. Zakirov found gold objects worth R700 and R15,000 and returned them to the owner.

[Correspondent] But there are also other concerns. After all, administrative buildings have been destroyed....

[Dubinyak] Yes, there is trouble enough.

Ensign Katorzhin saved secret documents and accounted for some ammunition. Lieutenant Andrey Bodovets prevented the looting of a savings bank and took part in arresting a particularly dangerous criminal. It cannot be concealed that all kinds of scum have begun to be drawn to the sites of the tragedy in search of easy pickings.

[Correspondent] Yes, it is hard for very young men. There are also those provocative slogans like those heard 7 November on the square in Yerevan when, as they risked their lives, they were compared with fascists, when one artist depicted a Soviet soldier holding down an Armenian as he was being killed. And over all this was the inscription: "Friendship of the peoples of the USSR."

[Dubinyak] Yet at this time we are having to ensure order in the most diverse regions of both republics. I would be going against my conscience if I failed to note that we have confiscated thousands of firearms. Many guns, sawn-off shotguns, and other lethal "items" were surrendered voluntarily, but it was serious law enforcement work which contributed to that.

[Correspondent] How do you assess the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast?

[Dubinyak] It is acute and tense. There has been no breakthrough in many people's consciousness. There have been cases of individual citizens' being beaten in Martuni, cases of people being threatened with weapons, and of livestock being driven away.

[Correspondent] But the enterprises are working?

[Dubinyak] Yes, for several days now. But the situation is such that the Azerbaijanis are not going to work; they are frightened. But the situation and order in population centers and on the roads is controlled by our subunits.

[Correspondent] How much state money this is consuming irretrievably....

[Dubinyak] But that is the reality.... For instance, in one region crippled by the earthquake we discovered a tunnel while clearing away obstacles. It contained 27 weapons! Including a machinegun, 16 submachineguns, and 7 TT pistols. But supposing they had fallen into different hands?...

[Correspondent] That would indeed have been serious....

[Dubinyak] It is primarily a reality which we must consider. The time has passed when all sensible people merely appealed to human feelings and common sense. Those who are sowing discord and destabilizing the

situation are guided by just one feeling—putting themselves above the law and above humanity in order to realize their ambitious, self-seeking political desires. They have been able to corrupt some young people and to deform the legal and international consciousness of some of their fellow countrymen, blinding them with demagogic slogans. Unless we assess this honestly, unless we strike with all our might against the forces of evil, their actions will have grave consequences for the citizens of the two republics.

Yerevan Commandant on Looting, Military Control of Airport
NC1612082288 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 0300 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] Life in the republic is [words indistinct] to assistance. This is what Colonel General Albert Makashov, commandant of the Yerevan Special District, told Sarkis Sarkisyan:

On 15 December the (?efforts by the USSR Defense Ministry) devoted to restoring the earthquake area continued.

Some 20,000 people, 700 [word indistinct] engineering equipment, and 1,500 automobiles are working to this end. More than 100,000 (?beds), about 6,000 tents, 22,000 (?items of clothing), and thousands of hats and gloves have been given to [word indistinct] the victims of the earthquake. Food is being served in (?field restaurants). A field water-distribution network for (?200,000) cubic meters of water has been set up for Spitak City [words indistinct]. [Words indistinct] have been set up. During the cleaning up of the rubble, the soldiers collected more than R800,000 worth of valuable objects, all of which have been handed over to the proper authorities.

The situation in Yerevan and in the republic's other rayons where a special status and curfew are in effect is being (?guarded) by the soldiers. The day before last, curfew officials inspected 1,146 people, and 179 [words indistinct] were detained on various charges. Some 294 automobiles were inspected, and 21 were impounded. Firearms and edged weapons (?were not found). At the same time, [words indistinct], that recently (?hooligan) elements have become active. Robberies have taken place. (?The looting of items) arriving at Zvartnots airport has been noted, and the military command has placed the airport under its protection.

Gen Army Arkhipov Describes Early Medical Relief Effort

LD0812130688 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1222 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Moscow, 8 Dec (TASS)—[passage omitted] In the Armenian earthquake area, Soviet troops are carrying out a great deal of work alongside civil defense units and volunteers from the local population. Army General Vladimir Arkhipov, USSR deputy defense minister and chief of USSR rear services, told a TASS correspondent that just a few hours after the tremors field medical posts were in place in tents on the spot and immediately began to provide the necessary aid. Military surgeons have carried out a number of very complicated operations, including some on children, in field conditions.

By this morning the servicemen had set up posts to supply the victims with food. Tents are being put up where people evacuated from Leninakan, Kirovakan, and also a number of rural rayons can find refuge initially. The injured and those who have lost their homes are being housed in barracks, officers' quarters, clubs, cafeterias, and medical posts of a number of garrisons in the military district which were not damaged by the tremors. The victims are being supplied with warm army clothing and underwear.

Hundreds of qualified specialists from the military-medical academy and hospitals of the Leningrad and Moscow military districts have been sent by air this morning to the Transcaucasus to help the medical workers. A specially equipped aircraft has arrived from Tashkent to evacuate the injured.

Initial Military Medical Relief Work

WA1801028188 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Dec 88 First Edition pp 1, 4

[Article by correspondent Maj Yu. Mamchur, Leninakan-Yerevan: "Fight for Life"]

[Excerpts] "The ground shook in such a way that it was hard to stay on one's feet," was how Lieutenant Colonel of Medical Service (Reserve) V. Skorlukhanov, a doctor at the military hospital, described it. "The walls trembled, and we doctors rushed to the wards: Everyone out into the street!"

Lieutenant Colonel of Medical Service A. Nigmatulin, the hospital chief, ran out to the stunned people—he did not leave the building until plaster began raining on his head.

"Are all the patients here?"

No one could say for sure.

"Follow me!" Andrey Mikhaylovich exclaimed, and rushed back inside.

Alas, not all could be rescued: A staircase had fallen.

The doctors opened fully the wide doors of the hospital. They did not have to wait long. Within just minutes the medical personnel were surrounded by hundreds of blood-stained people—wounded, contused and stunned people from the houses and neighboring streets. Some made it there on their own, some were led, and others were carried.... But they all knew that this was a military hospital. This was the place to get help.

The hallways of the building occupied by the medical company commanded by Captain of Medical Service V. Marchenko were packed with people, such that it was no longer possible to get through. Marchenko and his subordinates worked themselves to the limit. Working together with personnel who arrived from the hospital, they provided medical assistance to more than 400 casualties by 9 o'clock in the evening. Over 80 operations were carried out.

The work done here by military medical personnel in the most dramatic hours right after the earthquake is beyond reward. Let me name at least a few of them:

Lieutenant colonels of medical service Dzhamshid Yusibov and Andrey Nigmatulin, captains of medical service Vladimir Marchenko, Valeriy Moskalenko and Vladimir Malyutin, Senior Lieutenant of Medical Service Ivan Kachur, Lieutenant Colonel of Medical Service (Reserve) Viktor Skorlukhanov, Soviet Army employees, physicians Viktor Sychennikov and Lyudmila Privalova, surgical nurses Liliya Bezzubenko, Nelli Mikhaylichenko, Agunik Gevorkyan, Vartush Stepanyan, Larisa Kuznetsova....

[Passage omitted].

At 1700 hours on 7 December a group of medical specialists from the district military hospital arrived at Leninakan Airport under the command of Lieutenant Colonel of Medical Service V. Khan, chief of the therapeutic ward of the Transcaucasian Military District's medical service. All of the roads were congested by transportation, and it was impossible to get the doctors out of the airport. Valeriy Mikhaylovich got to the medical company on his own. How he did it, God and he only know. He had to get his bearings and estimate the situation. He knew that at best, it would take at least 2 or 3 hours to get his group of district hospital doctors here. In the meantime he assumed command. Preparation of additional dressing points and of work stations for the medical specialists was started.

Meanwhile Colonel of Medical Service V. Shachkin took charge of the medical personnel awaiting transportation at the airport. He decided that aid could be provided right inside the airplanes, to include stopping bleeding and injecting painkillers. He separated his group into teams of two or three persons. They began their work.

Confusion reigned at the airport in these hours. No one could say for sure what kind of patients to put where. Vladimir Mikhaylovich went to airport officials and demanded that a control point be set up to load the airplanes (so it was that his experience in Afghanistan came into use!). This was necessary because some of the airplanes were taking off with no more than a dozen casualties! The airport allocated officials, and Shachkin, taking his cues from the situation, took charge as something close to a military medical commandant. After a little while things were organized.

A vehicle finally arrived for them. Thankfully, civilian medical personnel appeared on the scene as well, and Vladimir Mikhaylovich transferred his authority to them.

At half past ten in the evening the district hospital doctors reached the company's location. The most active and qualified work began here from this moment on. Specialists soon arrived from other military hospitals and medical battalions of the Transcaucasian Military District as well. Four of the six surgical teams were working at any one time. Complex abdominal operations, limb amputations, resuscitation. The pace increased with every hour, even though there were cracks all over the building, cabinets were falling off the walls, and plaster was strewn everywhere. The triage process was put right, in many ways owing to the high degree of professional work by Lieutenant Colonel of Medical Service I. Makhlin.

It was learned from the seismologists that one more aftershock was possible at three or four in the morning. A decision was made to move the operation into tents.

Between noon on 7 December and six in the morning of the 8th, the medical company provided assistance to 1,200 persons. Around 600 were evacuated by way of the airport.

Between 0600 hours on the 8th and 0800 hours on the 9th 500 were admitted, and 84 were evacuated.

On the third day the figures were 182 and 51 respectively.

In all of that time 55 servicemen and 160 family members were admitted.

In 3 days the surgeons performed many dozens of operations, including highly complex ones. In the estimation of Colonel of Medical Service L. Nyanin all specialists and nurses worked with the greatest efficiency and coordination. Many did not get even a minute's sleep for 2 or 3 days.

Lev Alekseyevich had arrived from Kirovakan and Spitak just an hour prior to our conversation. Military medical personnel assumed the brunt of the work there as well. In Kirovakan it was Major N. Rasskazov's medical company jointly with doctors of City Hospital No 1. In Spitak it was a group of surgeons of the Military Medical Academy imeni S. M. Kirov under the supervision of Colonel of Medical Service V. Satsyukevich, the senior instructor of the Department of Surgery and Physician Advanced Training.

During our discussion Lev Alekseyevich was informed that an expectant mother had arrived, and she was in labor.

"All right, then, prepare for delivery!" Colonel Nyanin cracked his first smile. Then he explained: "For a while, at first, we were the main obstetric-gynecological force. The local maternity hospital had been destroyed. Three hundred women in labor and doctors were killed."

[Passage omitted].

I spoke with Colonel of Medical Service L. Nyanin about the things that kept the medical personnel from working even more effectively, though it was hard to think how things could have been any better!

The fact that centralized leadership of the entire course of the work was not organized right away did of course have its effect. As far as the medical personnel are concerned, they had to deal with the medicine problem.

[Passage omitted].

DOSAAF Donates R2 Million to Quake Victims
*LD0912221788 Moscow Television Service in Russian
1530 GMT 9 Dec 88*

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] The USSR Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Air Force, and Navy [DOSAAF] Central Committee has sent a telegram of condolences to the Armenian people in connection with the tragic consequences of the earthquake. In order to give assistance to those stricken and to eliminate the consequences of the natural disaster, the USSR-DOSAAF Central Committee Presidium has decided to allocate R2 million to the republic.

Main Motor Vehicle Directorate

[Editorial Report] Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 14 December 1988 published on page 2 of the first edition an article by Lieutenant Colonel V. Bashilov states that enterprises of the Main Motor Vehicle Directorate of the Ministry of Defense located the Kiev, Moscow and Odessa MDs have sent engines and spare parts for motor vehicle repair.

DOSAAF Aircraft, Maintenance Personnel from BAM Sent to Aid Disaster Relief Effort
*18010289b Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian
16 Dec 88 First Edition p 1*

[Articles by Maj G. Khudinskiy and S. Maykov, "Into the Disaster Area"]

[Text] [Maj G. Khudinskiy] Soldiers of the railroad troops from the Eastern Section of the Baykal-Amur Rail

Mainline were saddened by news of the earthquake in Armenia. Relief staffs have been created everywhere. For example Lieutenant Colonel M. Sidorovich took command of one of them. Just soldiers of our unit alone contributed around 10,000 rubles to the victim relief fund. This was money from savings of the servicemen and earnings from extra work days. Clothing packages for victims have been sent to Leninakan on the initiative of the women's councils.

One other thing: Forty-eight military railroad workers having work experience with the mainline's stations and sidings left for the disaster area to provide assistance in operating the Transcaucasian Railway in the Kirovakan-Leninakan section.

[S. Maykov] An airplane of the USSR Central Aeroclub imeni V. P. Chkalov took off yesterday on a special run to Yerevan. It will deliver tents, bedding and other basic necessities allocated by the DOSAAF Central Committee to the earthquake victims. A group of sports parachute jumpers was sent on that airplane to work in hard-to-reach places. All of them are USSR masters of sports and participants of the Arctic Ekspark Expedition.

A column of heavy trucks has also been sent to Armenia from Moscow. The best driving instructors of the capital's DOSAAF motor vehicle schools will bring prefabricated houses manufactured at the defense society's enterprises to the disaster area.

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